AN

SEFUL CASE

OF

CONSCIENCE,

Concerning Aſſociations and Confederacies with Idolaters, Infidels, Heretics, Malignants, or any other known Enemies of Truth and Godlineſs.

Learnedly diſcuſſed and accurately reſolved.

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AN USEFUL CASE OF CONSCIENCE, &c.

That the present Public Resolutions and Proceedings do import a Conjunction with the Malignant Party in the Kingdom, and of the Sin, Danger, and Scandal of that Way.

Sect. 1. *That there is a malignant party still in the kingdom.*

IN the entry to this business, the importunity of not a few makes it needful to speak somewhat to a question which unto this time hath been unquestioned, as beyond all exception; that is, *Whether there be yet in Scotland a malignant party?* Or, *Whether there be at this time any party who may and ought, in reason and Christian prudence, to be reputed and looked upon as malignants and disaffected to the covenanted cause of God?* It seems the more needful to speak somewhat of this, 1. Because some ministers are become slack and silent in this point, as if now there were no need of watchfulness and warning against any such party. 2. Because the expressions of many people of the land run that way, that there are now no malignants in Scotland, and that it is but a few factious ministers that will still keep up these names, that they may more easily, with others of their own stamp, weaken and divide the kingdom, for carrying on of their own ends. 3. Because the inclinations and resolutions of the public judicatories, in reference to most of the party who carried that name, doth clearly import that they do think they are no more to be looked upon as malignants, as appears from several of their papers; especially the letter written for satisfaction to the presbytery of Stirling. And therefore this must be laid down as the foundation of what follows: *That there is still in the land, not only a few persons, but a party considerable for number, power and policy, who are malignant and disaffected to the covenant and cause of God.*

We would join heartily in the desire of many, that these and other such like odious names of different parties and factions were taken away; but we cannot join in the reasons of this desire which are ordinarily given. We wish the name malignant were obsolete and antiquate, if so be the thing itself, which is such a root of bitterness, were extirpated out of the church; yea, though the thing itself remained, if men would hate it for itself, and account it more odious and hateful than the name imports, we would be glad it were no more heard of. Because we find this prejudice by all such appropriated names, that people generally look upon that which goes under that name as the only sin: and as if there was not that root of bitterness, in all which it grows out of, in any; and so conceive themselves good Christians if they fall not under that hateful appellation of malignants. But seeing this bitter fruit of enmity against godliness and the godly, comes to more ripeness and maturity in many of this generation than in others, who yet are unconverted: And seeing it hath been the custom of the church of God in all generations, to discriminate many more ungodly and known haters of godliness and his people from the common sort of natural people, and to comprehend them under the names, of *wicked*, of *malignant*, of *enemies*, as may appear in the Old Testament, especially in the Psalms. And more especially in our days, that name hath been appropriated to such who have declared themselves in their words or actions to be haters of godliness and the power thereof, and his people, or have arisen to the height of actual opposition against these; we cannot be blamed for using such a name still, for distinction's sake. We proceed to some reasons.

(1.) The constant and continued proceedings of the General Assembly and their commissioners for many years past unto this day.

There is not almost any of their warnings, declarations or remonstrances, which doth not assert this, and warn against it; and that not only before the king's home-coming and taking of the covenant, but also since that time, as is evident by the Declaration emitted by the commission in July last; the Declaration of the Assembly itself, a little after; by the Declaration emitted at Stirling since the defeat at Dunbar; the Causes of the Fast upon that defeat; the Remonstrance to the king at Perth after his escape; together

ther with the Remonſtrance given in by them to the parliament; all which do clearly hold forth this truth.

(2.) Take Chriſt's rule, *By their fruits ye ſhall know them.* There is a great party in the land that adhere to malignant principles, bring forth malignant fruits, and tread malignant paths, as may appear in theſe inſtances. (1.) A great many of theſe who have been formerly engaged in ſuch courſes, and under church cenſures, did lately conjoin together and riſe in arms, and drew away the king from the publie councils of the kingdom, and refuſed to lay down arms till they got conditions agreeable to their minds; which courſe of theirs was juſtly declared by the commiſſion to carry upon it the ſtamp of malignancy in an eminent way. (2.) The ſeeking to promote and eſtabliſh an arbitrary power in the perſon of the king, as it hath been ſtill the endeavour of the malignant party, ſo it hath been always taken by the kirk of Scotland as one of their characters, and that there is a party now in Scotland, who ſtill hold that principle and drive this deſign of arbitrary power is evident. Firſt, becauſe theſe ſame men, who were lately in arms, did not only take up arms upon the king's ſimple warrant, and without the knowledge, and contrary to the mind of the committee of eſtates; but alſo received the act of indemnity, and laid down arms, in obedience to the king's majeſty, without ſo much as mentioning or acknowledging the committee of eſtates, as it is to be ſeen in a paper ſubſcribed by them, and in the remonſtrance of the commiſſion of the General Aſſembly, dated at Perth, Nov. 29. 1650. the words whereof are theſe. *Your lordſhips ſhould likewiſe conſider, whether it doth not encroach upon the preſent conſtitution of government of this kingdom, and will not involve your lordſhips in the guilt of theſe mens ſin, if you ſhall accept of their laying down of arms, merely upon the profeſſion of obedience to the king's command, without any expreſſion of their reſpect and obedience to the committee of eſtates, or any acknowledgement of their ſin and offence: which we hope you will look upon as a moſt unnatural and unſeaſonable rending of the kingdom, in the time of this heavy oppoſition by a common enemy, and expoſing the kingdom to all miſery and ruin.* 2. It may be remembered that in the firſt model of the agreement which was made at Breda, that clauſe which doth concern the determining of civil matters in the interval of parliament, by ſuch as are authorized by parliament for that effect, and the king's ma-

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jeſty hearkening to their advice was wholly left out. And any who are acquainted with expreſſions and inclinations of ſundry great ones in the land, are not ignorant of their diſlike of a committee of eſtates, and their deſire to have the adminiſtration of matters, in the interval of parliament, wholly devolved upon the king's council. And the ſame ſpirit that would draw buſineſs from the committee to a cabinet council, would at laſt draw them from the parliament itſelf; becauſe that is alſo, if not more, croſſing to private intereſts and deſigns than a committee of eſtates. 3 Inſtance. There is a party in the land who as in their hearts they do envy, and in their tongues do traduce men that have been ſtedfaſt and faithful in the covenant and cauſe of God; ſo do they endeavour to the utmoſt of their power, to bring them into diſgrace and contempt, and to get them removed from power and truſt; and, upon the other ſide, ſtudy with no leſs diligence to get places of power and truſt, in the army and elſewhere, filled with ſuch as either have been open enemies or ſecret underminers. 4 Inſtance. Are there not many who oppoſe the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt and work of reformation? not only by holding up that old calumny of malignants, concerning the ſeditious and factious humour of miniſters, and their ſtretching of themſelves beyond their line, and by mocking all faithful and free preaching of the word, and by bearing down the power of godlineſs, deriding and hating all the lovers and followers thereof, by being impatient of the diſcipline and cenſures of the church; but alſo looking upon the government of the church with an evil eye, and ſtrongly inclining, ſome of them, that church government be put in the hands of a few prelates, moſt of them that it may be wholly devolved upon the civil government. *5th* Inſtance. There is ſtill a party in the land that endeavour to have the ſtate of the queſtion altered, and to have religion left out of the ſame; that it being ſtated upon civil intereſt, they may take to themſelves a greater latitude in their way of carrying on buſineſs. This was holden forth to be the deſign of the malignant party in the year 1648, as appears in the Declaration of the Commiſſion that year in March: and there was a neceſſary and ſeaſonable warning given againſt it by the Commiſſion in their Declaration, of the date July 1650.

(3.) Beſides thoſe who are excommunicated, there are yet in the land a conſiderable number of perſons of chief note, who

who do ſtill lie under cenſures of the church; ſome becauſe of their acceſſion to the late unlawful engagement; others becauſe of their acceſſion to the late courſe of rebellion, about the time of the king's eſcape from Perth; beſides many others of leſs note.

(4.) We ſuppoſe that it is moſt certain and unqueſtionable, that there was lately a malignant party and faction in the land, very numerous and powerful. How many men of blood, murderers of their brethren, as unnatural and barbarous as the Iriſh they once joined with againſt their country? How many have watched all opportunities for troubling the peace of the kingdom, and rejoiced in the day of its calamity? How many were the oppreſſors of theſe who called on the Lord's name in the time of the engagement? What multitudes of profane and ungodly mockers of all godlineſs, and haters and perſecutors of the godly, ſwarming every where? If this be truth, as it is indeed, we may ſay, Who hath heard ſuch a thing? Who hath ſeen ſuch a thing? Shall a nation be born at once? And have they ſo ſoon learned to do well, who have been ſo long accuſtomed to do evil? When did this catholic converſion fall out? and by what means? Hath the act of indemnity and pardon ſuch influence, to juſtify theſe men from all their butcheries and barbarous cruelties? The adding of three thouſand to the church in one day, was miraculous in the days of miracles. But behold a greater miracle than that, in the days when miracles are ceaſed! many thouſands added to the church of the friends of the cauſe of God in one day, and that not by preaching, which is the power of God unto ſalvation; not by ſpiritual weapons, which are mighty through God: but by the carnal weapon of an act of indemnity, and the example of one man, the king's conjunction in the cauſe, which at the beſt hath not ſuch evidence of reality as to convince any, and change their mind. Sad experience, and the conſtant teſtimony of the church of Scotland proves, that malignancy is a weed that hath deeper and ſtronger roots than to be plucked up ſo eaſily; and that though there be ſome, yet there is but few in the land who have been once engaged in that way, that have really and indeed abandoned and come off the ſame.

The point ſhall more appear by taking off objections that are made to the contrary. It is objected, 1. That theſe who were formerly eſteemed malignants, did oppoſe the work of

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God becauſe they could not be perſuaded in conſcience, that the covenant and cauſe were contrived and carried on in a warrantable way, thoſe who were moſt inſtrumental in it, ſeeming to them not only to act without authority, but againſt authority. But ſo it is, that the king hath now joined in the covenant and added his authority to it, and therefore it needs not be feared that theſe men will any more oppoſe it; nay it may be expected, they will no leſs zealouſly promote the ends thereof than they did formerly oppoſe the ſame.

Anſw. This argument ſuppoſeth ſome things that are falſe, ſome things at beſt doubtful, and ſome things dangerous. It ſuppoſeth two falſities. 1. That it was a ground and principle of conſcience and reſpect to the king's authority that made theſe men to oppoſe the covenant and work of reformation. If it was the conſcience and conviction of the unwarrantableneſs of it for the want of authority, that ſtirred them up to oppoſe the covenant and cauſe; then why did they ſubſcribe it and join in the defence of the ſame againſt the king? 2. It ſuppoſeth that the only ground, why they did oppoſe and undermine the ſame, was, becauſe the king was of a contrary mind, and refuſed to join in the covenant, and ratify the ſame by his authority, which alſo is falſe: for there were ſeveral other grounds and cauſes of ſo doing beſides this. We ſhall name a few, leaving the reſt to a further ſcrutiny. 1. The natural enmity that is in the hearts of all men againſt the Lord and his anointed, his work and people, and the power of godlineſs, which doth effectually work in the children of diſobedience. 2. An enmity againſt the power of parliament and laws. 3. An enmity againſt the union of the kingdoms. 4. An enmity againſt the power of preſbyteries, and the diſcipline of the church. To which are oppoſed, a ſinful deſire of breaking the bonds, and caſting away the cords of the Lord and his anointed; a deſire to eſtabliſh an arbitrary power and unlimited monarchy; a deſire to eſtabliſh a lordly prelatical power in the perſons of a few, or to have the government of the church wholly dependent on the civil power; a deſire to diſſolve the union of the kingdoms, that they may be thereby weakened and leſs able to reſiſt malignant deſigns againſt religion and liberties; a deſire to live looſely without bands in regard of perſonal reformation.

2. It ſuppoſeth ſomething that is at beſt doubtful, *to wit*,

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That the king hath really joined unto the cauſe of God, there being ſmall evidences of it, and many preſumptions to the contrary. Eſpecially, 1. His bringing home with him into the kingdom a number of eminent, wicked and known malignants. His countenancing of, and familiar converſing with ſuch in this nation ſince his coming, and correſpondence with others of them abroad. His deſerting of the public councils of the kingdom, to join to a party of bloody and wicked men, raiſed in arms with his knowledge and by his warrant. 2. His not being convinced of any guilt in his father, becauſe of his oppoſition to the cauſe and covenant, notwithſtanding of all the blood of the Lord's people ſhed by him in that oppoſition. For verifyitng whereof, we appeal to the knowledge of ſome noblemen and miniſters who have occaſion to know his mind, and to be ſeridus with him in this thing.

3. It ſuppoſeth ſomething that is of very dangerous conſequence. 1. That theſe mens zeal to the cauſe or againſt it, doth ebb and flow according to the king's being againſt it or for it. Since they follow the cauſe, not for itſelf but for the king, will they not deſert it when the king forſakes it? Can they be accounted real friends of the cauſe who are known to favour it only *ad nutum principis?* As the comedian *ait; aio, negat, nego.* Is it not all one to follow the cauſe for the king and for a man's own intereſt and advantage? both are alike extrinſic and adventitious to the cauſe, both are alike changeable. Eccebulus under Conſtantius was a preciſe Chriſtian; under Julian a perſecuting apoſtate; and then again under the next Chriſtian emperor became a Chriſtian: And it is like if he had outlived that emperor till a Heathen ſucceeded, he ſhould have paganized the ſecond time. 2. That very principle that is pretended to unite them to the cauſe is in itſelf moſt dangerous, both to the privileges of parliament and liberties of the people, and to our religion beſide. Their principle of oppoſition was, "They conceived the way followed could not be warrantable without the king's conſent and warrant. That people might not vindicate their own juſt rights and liberties, and their religion, without the king's concurrence, or againſt him." Now then, the principle of their conjunction to the cauſe muſt be this, "Becauſe it is now clothed with authority which it had not before, and which now makes it warrantable." This principle therefore includes in the boſom

of it, the eſtabliſhing of unlimited and abſolute power in kings; the unlawfulneſs of defenſive wars againſt tyranny and oppreſſion; the king's negative voice; and the dependent power of parliaments upon his pleaſure: All which are principles deſtructive of the cauſe and our liberties, and the very characters of our enemies from the beginning. Thus they have changed their way but not their principles, and are now the more dangerous that they may not be looked upon as enemies, but as friends. Seeing it is manifeſt, that it is not the love of the cauſe that conſtrains them, and they know it was not that principle that perſuaded the king, but mere neceſſity, contrary to his own inclination, may we not certainly expect, that according to their principles they will labour to ſet at freedom the king, whom they conceive impriſoned and captivated by the power of neceſſity within the limits and bounds of a regulated monarchy, and to looſe him from all theſe chains of involuntary treaties and agreements, and rigid laws and parliaments, that he may then act in freedom and honour according to his own inclination and theirs both; and then farewell religion and liberties.

Object 2. The moſt part of theſe who were formerly malignant, have now repented of that ſin, and make profeſſion of their reſolution to adhere to the covenant and cauſe of God, and to beſtow their lives and eſtates in defence thereof: Therefore they are not now to be eſteemed malignants.

Anſw. We would wiſh from our hearts that we had no anſwer to this argument, then ſhould we yield the point in hand, and yield it cheerfully, that there is no malignant party now in Scotland. But, alas! that we have ſo much evidence convincing our conſciences and perſuading them to deny what is objected. We acknowledge ſome have indeed repented, and ſuch we deſire to embrace and receive with all tenderneſs and love, as godly Chriſtians, worthy to be entruſted: But yet the moſt part of them do ſtill bring forth the ſame malignant fruits. Their ungodly and wicked practices teſtify to their face that they have nothing *to do to take his covenant in their mouth*, ſeeing they hate to be reformed. The late riſing in arms, contrary to their ſolemn and particular engagements; their bearing down and reproaching the godly, and ſuch as are of known integrity; their ſtudying to fill places of truſt with men formerly enemies or underminers; their continuing in their profane and looſe walking. All theſe are more convincing evidences of their retain-

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ing their old principles than any extorted confeſſions or profeſſions; for ſiniſter reſpects and ends, can be no probable ſigns of their repentance and change.

We deſire theſe things to be remembered, 1. That the engagement was carried on, not by open and profeſſed enemies, but ſuch as had made public profeſſion of their repentance, and were thereupon admitted to truſt. 2. That upon conſideration of the hypocriſy and inſtability of theſe men appearing in that and other particulars, the kirk and kingdom of Scotland did take upon themſelves ſtrait bonds and engagements to exclude ſuch from truſt, until ſuch time as they had given real evidences of the reality of their repentance, and of abandoning their former principles and ways; of which this kirk was to judge impartially as in God's ſight. 3. That it hath been confeſſed and preached by many godly miniſters, and was given in by ſundry in the time of the ſearch of the Lord's controverſy againſt the land, in November laſt at Perth, and hath been bemoaned and regretted by many of the people who feared God; that there is a great deal of ſin and guilt lying on the kirk of Scotland, for the ſudden receiving of ſcandalous perſons, eſpecially malignants, to the public profeſſion of repentance before there was in them any real evidence of their forſaking their former principles and ways.

Object. 3. None are now to be eſteemed malignants, in reference to employment and truſt, but ſuch as ſtand judicially debarred by kirk and ſtate to be ſo: for certainly, men are not to lie under the burden of ſo great a reproach, upon the private whiſperings and common reports of others; otherwiſe, honeſt men may be wronged, and there ſhall be no end of confuſion, or terminating this controverſy, there being no certain rule to walk by in it.

Anſw. We acknowledge that ſurmiſings, whiſperings and reports of others are not ſufficient, but that a rule is needful. All the queſtion will be, what is that rule? And though the judicial debarring of judicatories be not all, but it muſt be ruled by another rule, yet are we willing to take it for ſo much: for even that will prove there is yet a malignant party in Scotland, becauſe many are ſtanding under church cenſures. Theſe involved in the late rebellion, are ſtanding under a ſentence of the commiſſion, declaring them to be following their old malignant deſigns, few of them are yet admitted to profeſſion of repentance. We deſire

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it may be conſidered, that the rule holden forth by the kirk of Scotland 1648, for admitting of perſons to truſt, is of larger extent than judicial ſentence or cenſure. *To wit*, That they be ſuch againſt whom there is no juſt cauſe of exception or jealouſy. 2. Albeit a judicial trial or cenſure be indeed neceſſary, for inflicting puniſhment or cenſure upon men; yet it is not neceſſary for avoiding aſſociation with them, or debarring them from truſt. 3. If none were to be accounted malignants, but they who are judicially declared to be ſuch, what needed the kirk of Scotland have frequently taken ſo much pains, to give characters to know them by, there being ſo clear and compendious a way beſide? Hath there not been always in the land ſecret underminers as well as open enemies? And hath not faithful men avoided the one as well as the other? 4. The General Aſſembly, 1648, declared the taking in of theſe who followed James Graham to be an aſſociation with malignants, tho' moſt part of them were then releaſed from church cenſures.

Sect. 2. *That the preſent public reſolutions, expreſſed in the Commiſſion's Anſwer to the Parliament's Query, and the Act of the Levy, do not exclude that party.*

IN the next place, upon ſuppoſal and proof, that there is a malignant party and faction ſtill in the land, it is needful to examine, whether the exceptions contained in the Anſwer of the Commiſſion to the Parliament's Query, and inſerted into the Act of Levy, be ſo comprehenſive as to include all that party. The exceptions be four. 1. *Such as are excommunicated.* 2. *Such as are forfaulted.* 3. *Such as are notoriouſly profane or flagitious.* *And*, 4. *Such as have been from the beginning, and continue ſtill, or at this time are, obſtinate enemies and oppoſers of the covenant and cauſe of God.* That theſe are not comprehenſive of the whole malignant party in the land, appears.

First, The rules of the General Aſſembly framed for the excluſion of all ſuch, as ought not to be employed in our armies, are far more comprehenſive. The rule is for employing of ſuch only *as are of a Chriſtian and blameleſs converſation*, which is turned over by their commiſſioners into a negative, *All that are not notoriouſly profane or flagitious.* Another is, for entruſting only theſe *who have been of known integrity and conſtant friends to the cauſe of God from the beginning;*

ginning; which is alſo turned over into a negative; *All that have not been conſtant enemies.* All ſuch, by the Anſwer, are capable of ſome truſt and employment. The rules agreed upon by the aſſembly, and ratified by act of parliament, *anno* 1649, and renewed upon occaſion of this invaſion, was, That no officer nor ſoldier that followed James Graham, ſhould be permitted in the army; nor any officer that was on the engagement, except ſuch as upon real evidence of repentance, were particularly recommended by the church; nor any common ſoldier, but upon ſufficient teſtimony of his repentance. Now, ſince it is proved that the moſt part of all ſuch continues ſtill malignants, and retain their old principles; and that the bulk and body of the people are called forth by the public reſolution, without ſuch exceptions as were conceived before neceſſary, for the excluſion of that party; it follows clearly, that the malignant party is not excepted in the preſent reſolutions.

2. Few of theſe who were in the late rebellion, and declared, not many days ſince, to be following a moſt malignant deſign and courſe, are contained under theſe exceptions; becauſe very few of them are excommunicated or forfaulted: and though more of them be indeed flagitious and profane; yet very few of them will fall under the compaſs of the exception, notoriouſly flagitious. Many wicked things will be ſaid to concur to make up a profane man; ſome acts will not ſerve; a habit muſt be demonſtrated; and though that were ſhewed, yet there muſt be alſo a notoriety of it, which imports a man to be famous for looſneſs and profanity; and there are none almoſt, if any, in the land, who have been profeſſed enemies from the beginning, and continue ſo to this day. James Graham was not ſuch. It is the matter of our ſad complaint, that whilſt many are enemies, they make profeſſion and ſemblance of friendſhip. 3. Theſe exceptions do not comprehend any who are under cenſure for malignancy or profanity, except ſuch as are under the ſentence of excommunication; and that even ſuch may not be excluded, leſt the rule be tranſgreſſed, by admitting and employing excommunicated perſons. 'Tis withal reſolved, that theſe perſons ſhall be relaxed from that ſentence, that ſo they may be immediately in the ſame capacity of employment with others, whatever formerly hath been their oppoſition or defection. Some exceptions muſt be made, for honeſty and credit's ſake; But the neareſt and readieſt way

is taken to make them ineffectual. 4. Theſe exceptions do not only not reach theſe who were upon the unlawful engagement, and have not as yet given ſufficient proof of their abandoning their malignant principles and courſes; but come not the length of comprehending theſe men of blood who followed James Graham, and in the moſt barbarous and cruel way, ſhed the blood of their own brethren and God's people; becauſe the moſt part of theſe are not *excommunicated nor forfaulted*; nor *notoriouſly flagitious and profane*; nor ſuch as *have from the beginning been, and ſtill are enemies*. If any will ſay, that ſuch are comprehended under theſe exceptions, Why did the Commiſſion expreſs the exceptions in ſuch terms, as to mens common apprehenſion do not include many? eſpecially ſeeing there are known rules, particular and diſtinct, without ambiguity; and ſeeing there is ſuch a propenſion in rulers to employ all without difference, which would undoubtedly take advantage of any thing that ſeemed to look that way.

It is likewiſe manifeſt, that the ſecond part of the anſwer, relating to the capacity of acting, is loaded with the ſame inconvenience. 1. There is no poſitive determination of the qualifications of perſons to be intruſted, as in former times it was agreed on by the Aſſembly and their Commiſſioners: but that is now referred to the diſcretion of the parliament; together with ſuch diminutive terms, as gives them great latitude to go upon. Before, no truſt was given to ſuch perſons; now, it is allowed they ſhall have ſome truſt: and how much is not determined, nor what degree of it is prejudicial to the cauſe; which it appears, the parliament's proceedings in nomination of officers, unqueſtioned by the Commiſſion, is a good commentary to expound that they may have any truſt, except to be general officers. 2. Our former eſtabliſhed rule was, that no perſons ſhould be entruſted, but ſuch *as are of known integrity, and have been conſtant friends of the cauſe*. But how far is this diminiſhed? They who are ſuch, only recommended to be eſpecially taken notice of. Leſs could not be ſaid by any; more ought to have been ſaid by the Commiſſion. And though no ſuch notice be taken of ſuch by the parliament: but on the contrary, thoſe who have been moſt faithful, and ſuffered in the late defeat at Hamilton, they are uſed as enemies, worſe than malignants in former times; yet there

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is no teſtimony given againſt ſuch things. *Quantum mutatus ab illo cœtu qui quondam fuit!*

Before we enter upon the chief queſtion, we offer theſe manifeſt and known truths to conſideration.

1. The occaſion of contriving and ſubſcribing firſt the national covenant, and then the ſolemn league and covenant, was, the deſigns and practices of the popiſh, prelatical and malignant party, againſt religion and the work of reformation in theſe kingdoms. 2. Since the contriving and ſubſcribing of the ſame, it hath been the continual endeavour of that party, ſometimes by undermining, and ſometimes by open oppoſition, to undo the ſame, and to bear down all thoſe that cláve honeſtly thereto, and faithfully proſecute all the ends thereof. 3. That there hath been theſe many years paſt, and ſtill is, ſuch a party, in all the three kingdoms, conſiderable for number, power and policy. 4. That that party, hath always proſecuted their deſign, under a colour of zeal and reſpect to the king's authority and intereſt. 5. That that party hath always been the authors and abettors of much bloodſhed, many miſeries and ſad calamities to theſe nations. 6. That the people of God in theſe kingdoms, have taken upon themſelves a moſt ſolemn and ſacred bond of an oath and covenant to diſcover them, and bring them to condign puniſhment. 7. That it hath been one of the predominant ſins of Scotland under the bond of the covenant, to comply with them. 8. That indignation and wrath from the Lord, hath been following that party and their deſigns theſe years paſt. 9. That compliances with them hath always been curſed to us of God. 10. That few of that party do really abandon and forſake their corrupt principles and way, and join cordially in the cauſe and covenant. 11. That many of them do, after the profeſſion of their repentance for their oppoſition to the cauſe and covenant of God, relapſe frequently into the ſame ſin. 12. That ſudden receiving of many of them to fellowſhip and truſt, and too great credulity in believing their profeſſions, hath often coſt this land very dear. 13. That upon conſideration of the deep treachery and hypocriſy of theſe men, and the ſad conſequences following upon ſudden receiving of them, without evidence of a change, after long and renewed experience, this land renewed their obligations more ſtrictly in the ſolemn engagement. 14. That there hath been a deſign driven theſe two years paſt, to get that party again in

power

power and truſt. 15. That this deſign hath been teſtified againſt by the public reſolutions of the judicatories unto this time. 16. That as it hath been driven at very cunningly and actively, by many inſtruments and arguments of ſeveral ſorts; ſo hath it gained ground piece and piece, until at length many of them are brought into the court, and to the army and judicatories in the country: And now, by the public reſolutions, they are generally to be employed and entruſted. Thus the deſign is accompliſhed. But, 17. Theſe men do not ſatisfy themſelves with ſome degree of power; but endeavour to engroſs the whole power of the kingdom into their own hands, and ſtudy to bring into contempt, and cull out theſe, who have been and do continue conſtant in the cauſe of God. 18. That having power into their hands, they muſt act according to their own principles, and for eſtabliſhing their own ends. And laſtly, That theſe principles and ends, are deſtructive to the covenant and work of reformation.

Sect. 3. *That the employing of, and aſſociating with the malignant party, according as is contained in the public reſolutions, is ſinful and unlawful.*

IF there be in the land a malignant party of power and policy, and the exceptions contained in the Act of Levy doth comprehend but few of that party; then there need be no more difficulty to prove, that the preſent public reſolutions and proceedings, do import an aſſociation and conjunction with a malignant party, than to gather a concluſion from clear premiſes. But that ſuch a conjunction is in itſelf ſinful and unlawful, and beſides, a violation of our ſolemn oaths and engagements; a backſliding from our principles and profeſſions, and a walking contrary to the whole tenor and current of our former reſolutions and practices, is now to be made manifeſt.

Firſt, We reaſon from that conſtant, ſtanding and perpetual rule, which the Lord gives concerning the modelling and carriage of the armies of his people in all their wars. Deut. xxiii. 9. *When the hoſt goes forth againſt their enemies, then keep thee from every wicked thing.* And after, *If there be among you, any man that is unclean, by reaſon of uncleanneſs that chanceth him in the night, then ſhall he go abroad out of the camp; he ſhall not come within the camp.* (If for ceremonial

ceremonial uncleanneſs he was to be excluded, much more for moral, as our divines reaſon from the Old Teſtament in the point of excommunication; and if for uncleanneſs not voluntary, much more for voluntary wickedneſs.) The reaſon of all is given ver. 14. *For the Lord thy God walks in the midſt of the camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee: Therefore ſhall thy camp be holy, that he ſee no unclean thing in thee and turn away from thee.* Even as they would expect a bleſſing of the Lord, ſo ought they to keep their camp holy, as he is holy: He gives not ſuch a ſtrict rule for the competency of number, as for the qualifications of the perſons, as being the principal thing. Therefore the preſent conjunction with ſo many ungodly and wicked men, that have formerly declared themſelves enemies to God and his people, and to this day give no evidence to the contrary, is ſinful and unlawful.

2. The Lord hath frequently in ſcripture declared his diſlike and hatred of ſuch aſſociations and conjunctions. The ſcriptures cited in the General Aſſembly's declaration in the year 1648, againſt the engagement, are ſufficient proof of this. We ſhall take the argument as it is formed by the commiſſioners of that aſſembly, in their anſwer to the obſervations of the committee of eſtates upon the aſſembly's declaration, *p.* 7. "Every engagement in war, that is pre-"tended to be for religion, and hath in it a confederacy "and aſſociation with wicked men, enemies of true religion "is ſinful and unlawful. But the preſent engagement in "war, as it is held forth in the public reſolutions, is pre-"tended to be for religion, and yet hath in it a confederacy "and conjunction with wicked men, and enemies of true "religion." *Ergo,* The ſecond propoſition is evident from the two firſt ſections.

The firſt propoſition is proved from thoſe ſcriptures forementioned. God forbad conjunctions and confederacies with the enemies of his cauſe and people; not only the Canaanites, Exod. xxxiv. 12, 15. Deut. vii. 2. and other heathens, ſuch was Aſa his covenant with Benhadad, 2 Chron. xvi. to ver. 10. Ahaz his confederacy with the king of Aſſyria, 2 Kings xvi. 7, 10. 2 Chron. xviii. 16. but alſo with wicked men of the ſeed of Abraham, as Jehoſhaphat's with Ahab, 2 Chron. xviii. 3. *And Ahab king of Iſrael ſaid unto Jehoſhaphat king of Judah, Wilt thou go with me to Ramoth-Gilead? And he anſwered him, I am as thou art, and my people as thy people,*

and we will be with thee in the war, compared with chap. xix. 2. *And Jehu the ſon of Hanani the ſeer, went out to meet him, and ſaid to king Jehoſhaphat, Shouldſt thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord.* And with Ahaziah 2 Chron. xx. 35. *And after this did Jehoſhaphat king of Judah join himſelf with Ahaziah king of Iſrael, who did very wickedly.* Which being reproved for, he would not again join with Ahaziah, 1 Kings xxii. 49. *Then ſaid Ahaziah the ſon of Ahab unto Jehoſhaphet, Let my ſervants go with thy ſervants in the ſhips: But Jehoſhaphet would not.* And then Amaziah's aſſociation with 100,000 of Iſrael, 2 Chron. xxv. 7, 8, 9, 10. *But there came a man of God to him, ſaying, O king, let not the army of Iſrael go with thee; for the Lord is not with Iſrael*, to wit, with all the children of Ephraim. *But if thou wilt go, do it, be ſtrong for the battle: God ſhall make thee fall before the enemy: for God hath power to help and to caſt down. And Amaziah ſaid to the man of God, But what ſhall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Iſrael? And the man of God anſwered, The Lord is able to give thee much more than this. Then Amaziah ſeparated them*, to wit, the army that was to come to him out of Ephraim, *to go home again: Wherefore their anger was greatly kindled againſt Judah, and they returned home in great anger.* The ſin and danger of ſuch aſſociations may further appear from Iſa. viii. 12, 13. "Say ye "not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people ſhall "ſay, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be a- "fraid. Sanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and let him "be your fear, and let him be your dread. Jer ii. 18. "And now, what haſt thou to do in the way of Aſſyria, "to drink the waters of the river? Pſal. cvi. 35. But were "mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. "Hoſea v. 13. When Ephraim ſaw his ſickneſs, and Judah "ſaw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Aſſyrian, and "ſent to king Jareb: Yet could he not heal you, nor cure "you of your wound. And chap. vii 8, 11. Ephraim, he "hath mixed himſelf among the people: Ephraim is a "cake not turned. Ephraim alſo is like a ſilly dove with- "out heart: they call to Egypt; they go to Aſſyria. 2 Cor. "vi. 14, 15. Be ye not unequally yoked together with un- "believers; for what fellowſhip hath righteouſneſs with "unrighteouſneſs? and what communion hath light with "darkneſs?

" darkneſs? And what concord hath Chriſt with Belial? " or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" And if we ſhould eſteem God's enemies our enemies, and hate them with perfect hatred, how can we then join with them as friends? Pſal. cxxxix. 21.

The committee of eſtates at that time endeavoured to elude the ſtrength of theſe ſcriptures, and vindicate their engagement from the falling within the compaſs of them. But the commiſſion of the aſſembly that year took the maſk off their evaſions. Would to God we had no other party to deal with now. It was the evil and complaint of that time, that church and ſtate were divided. But what an evil time are we now fallen into, that the union of thoſe in this point, is the complaint of many of the godly? The commiſſion, in their letter to Stirling preſbytery, ſets up the committee's anſwer in a new dreſs, and holds it out for ſatisfaction to our conſciences. All that is anſwered may be reduced to three or four heads.

1. There is made a great difference between an invaſive and defenſive war, as if in the one, choice of inſtruments ought to be ſought: but in the caſe of juſt and neceſſary defence, all ſubjects may be employed.

To which we anſwer, 1. That the ſcriptures cited conclude moſt expreſly againſt conjunctions of that kind in defenſive wars. Such was Aſa's covenant, ſuch was Ahaz his confederacy. Were not the reproofs of the prophets directed particularly againſt the peoples ſeeking of help from Egypt and Aſſyria, in the caſe of their own juſt and neceſſary defence? Jer. ii. 18. Hoſea v. 13. and vii. 8, 11. Iſa. viii. 12, 13. 2 Chron. xvi. to ver. 10. 2. The law and rule given Deut. xxiii. is general, regulating all their wars whether defenſive or offenſive; and it is ſtrange that any ſhould imagine ſuch a difference where the law makes none; nay, when the ground of the law is moral and general, equally reſpecting all wars. Is there any ground of conſcience, why wicked perſons may not be kept in the camp when we invade others, and yet theſe may be employed and entruſted when we defend ourſelves? If there be any reaſon to prefer the one to the other in this point, we conceive defenſive war ſhould have the preference: Becauſe when the Lord brings upon us unjuſt invaſion, he is ordinarily purſuing a controverſy againſt us: and therefore we ought to be moſt tender and circumſpect, that there be no unclean

thing in the camp, and put away every wicked thing from us, even the appearance of evil; leſt we add oil to the flame of his indignation, and he ſeeing ſuch an unclean thing in us, turn yet further from us. Except we ſay, that we need not take care to have God in the camp with us, when we are upon juſt and neceſſary defence, ſeeing our cauſe is ſo good. 3. There is more hazard and danger to our religion and liberties, to have a wicked malignant army at home among us, than abroad in another nation. While they are here, they have the power of the ſword, and can command all; but there might be ſome hope and endeavour for vindicating our own liberties and religion while they are abroad, as it fell out in the time of the engagement.

2. It is anſwered, that there is a difference between this caſe and the engagement, becauſe there was then no neceſſity of chooſing ſuch inſtruments, a competency of power might be had; but now it is not ſo, and therefore the ſcriptures mentioned do not militate againſt the preſent caſe. *Anſw.* 1. The ſcriptures cited will obviate this. What made Iſrael and Judah run to Egypt or Aſſyria for help, but their weakneſs and neceſſity? Their wound was incurable, and their bruiſe grievous, as Jeremiah often laments, and particularly chap. viii. 20, 21, 22. and x. 19, *&c.* and yet this did not excuſe them for going to Egypt and Aſſyria to heal their wound, Hoſea v. 13. and vii. 8, 11. The ſcripture holds out infidelity and diſtruſt in God, as the ground of ſuch aſſociations, 2 Chron. xvi. 7, 8, 9. Iſa. viii 12, 13. which proceeds from the incompetency of means as the occaſion of it. 2. Suppoſe there was a neceſſity for calling forth the body of the common people, yet certainly there is no neceſſity of employing any ſuch perſons of whom the queſtion is, and putting them in places of truſt: There is none can deny, but there are, beſides all ſecluded perſons, many, that might fill the places of truſt and power: Therefore the plea of neceſſity is but a pretence to cover ſome deſign, that under its ſpecious and plauſible covering, the power of the land may be engroſſed into the hands of malignants: and ſo by this means all power and truſt may return, as the rivers to the ſea or fountain, as they judge the king, that ſo in his perſon there may be eſtabliſhed an unlimited and arbitrary power. 3. Neceſſity is a very plauſible argument and ſtrong plea to carnal reaſon for any thing; but it cannot be a good ground, in point of conſci-

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ence, for that which is ſinful in itſelf. Now that this is ſinful in itſelf appears from the word of God, ſimply condemning ſuch aſſociations upon moral, and ſo general and perpetual grounds. Now in ſuch a caſe of neceſſity, we are called either to truſt in God, in the uſe of competent means, ſeeing in ſuch caſes we have ſo many promiſes; or, if all help be gone, which God allows us to make uſe of, we muſt wait on him till he brings ſalvation with his own arm.

But becauſe the plea of neceſſity is the ſtrongeſt that is made uſe of for the preſent public reſolutions, we muſt conſider it a little more. It is alledged, that the beſt part of the land is under the feet of the enemy, and ſo no help can be had from it; and for other parts of the land which are yet free, there is not much choice of perſons; and the teſtimony of faithful men in the ſtate, declares, that when all that are called forth of theſe places, are gathered, it cannot amount to a power competent enough; And therefore in ſuch a queſtion of the exiſtence of ſecond means, the knowledge whereof immediately depends on ſenſe and experience, theſe who are not acquainted, ſhould give credit to the teſtimony of faithful witneſſes. And that a competency of power muſt be had, according to the ordinary way of Providence, in relation to which we muſt act, except we would tempt God by requiring of him wonders.

Anſw. Suppoſe the enemy's army to conſiſt of 20,000 or above, are there not more ſenſible perſons in the ſhires on the north ſide of Perth? Believe it who pleaſe, we cannot ſtop our own conſciences, and put out our own eyes. Let the rolls of ſeveral ſhires be looked to, and it ſhall confute that teſtimony. Nay, are there not more perſons not formerly ſecluded in all thoſe ſhires? What meant the levy appointed immediately after Dunbar? was not 10,000 foot and 1400 horſe put upon theſe ſhires which are not under the power of the enemy? and yet the rules of excluſion were not abandoned. Now all theſe, or moſt part of them, are yet in the country not levied. Money was taken inſtead of men; the levies obſtructed, ſo that there was little addition to the ſtrength of the forces that remained; the forces diverted by the inſurrection of the malignants in the north, at the king's command or warrant. All which hath ſuch pregnant preſumption of a deſign carried on to neceſſitate the kingdom to employ that party, by the cunning politicians of the time, by obſtructing the levies, raiſing the malignants, and then pacifying

cifying them by an act of indemnity, and at last openly and avowedly associating with them. Thus the design is accomplished which was long since on foot.

2. If satisfying courses had been studied by the public judicatories to carry on all the godly in the land with their resolutions, there had accrued strength from the parts of the land be-south Forth, which would have compensated all that competency of power that the conjunction of the malignants make up: and it may be would have been more blessed of God. 3. If there is no help required nor expected from those parts of the kingdom be-south Forth, wherefore did the Commission write to the presbyteries in those bounds that they might concur actively in their stations for the furtherance of the levies, and choose ministers to go out with them?

3. It is answered, That the confederacies reproved were unlawful, because they were either with heathens, or with idolaters, strangers and foreigners. This is answered to the case of Amaziah, *&c.* and so it seems not to make against the present case, the employing all subjects in the just and necessary defence of the kingdom.

Answ. 1. This answer at one blow cuts off all the strength of the General Assembly's reason against the association with malignants in that year. There might be some few persons idolaters, but there was no party and faction such; and yet they can deny association with the English malignants from those scriptures; yea, not only with them, but with our own countrymen that were in rebellion with James Graham, who were neither idolaters nor foreigners. We need no other answer than the Commission at that time gave to the committee of estates using that same evasion, *pag.* 10, 11. 2. The ground and reason whereupon such associations are condemned, is more general and comprehensive. Jehoshaphat was reproved for joining with Ahab, because he was *ungodly and hated the Lord*, which is properly in our terms, because he was a malignant and profane man. It was a strange mocking of scripture to restrict ungodliness, in that place, to the sin of idolatry. Confederacy with the Canaanites and other nations was forbidden on this ground, *that the people be not ensnared, and learn not their works.* Now is not the company of, and communion with ungodly men of the same general profession, but mockers and haters of the power thereof, as infectious and ensnaring? Nay, it is more

more apt to enſnare becauſe of the profeſſion. Paul would have as much diſtance kept with a brother walking diſorderly, as a Pagan: for ſuch a one as walks contrary to their profeſſion of the true religion, do evidence more ungodlineſs and wickedneſs, than an ignorant and ſuperſtitious Papiſt that walks preciſely according to his profeſſion. There is ſome principle of conſcience ſtirring in the one; but it is ſeared in the other with a hot iron. God ranks ſuch, who are uncircumciſed in heart, with the uncircumciſed in fleſh. Ought not his people to do ſo to? 3. The rule of modelling armies and purging the camp is moſt comprehenſive, Deut. xxiii. not only of idolaters and foreigners, but every wicked thing, and unclean thing, was to be removed out of the camp. Now, ſeeing thoſe examples are tranſgreſſions of this law, what reaſon is there to make the only ground of reproving and condemning of them to be, becauſe idolaters were aſſociated with, as if any other might be joined with, that is not an idolater. 4. That reaſon againſt Amaziah's conjunction with Iſrael is wreſted by ſome, expounding it thus. *God is not with them*, is not underſtood, *in regard of a ſtate of grace, as appears, nor in regard of God's proſpering providence; becauſe he was often with them in that regard: but it muſt be underſtood in regard of an idolatrous profeſſion.* But we reply, that it is true it is not underſtood in regard of a ſtate of grace; nor ſimply in regard of his proſpering providence: But *ut plurimum*, the Lord for the moſt part croſſing them till they were cut off from being a nation. But eſpecially it is to be meant in regard of a courſe oppoſite to God, according as the Lord ſpeaks, 2 Chron. xv. 2. *The Lord is with you while ye be with him, but if ye forſake him he will forſake you.* If any will reſtrict this to idolatry, he hath no ground from ſcripture for ſuch a limitation; but being engaged in the buſineſs, he wreſts the ſcriptures to his own deſtruction. Sure we are, there are many palpable forſakings of God, and God's forſaking of men, beſide idolatry and falſe worſhip. 5. That which is ſaid, *That God did not command Amaziah to diſmiſs any of his own ſubjects.* Either it makes not much to the preſent buſineſs, or elſe it ſtrikes againſt the law of God itſelf, that commanded ſuch ſtrict purging of the camp. From whom I pray you? Certainly from wicked Iſraelites, from wicked countrymen: Therefore if there was any ſuch among the men of Judah, he ought to have put them out of the army as well as the Iſraelites.

Iſraelites. Nay, the command of diſmiſſing the Iſraelites, was, really and upon the matter, a command to purge his camp of all that was of the ſtamp of the Iſraelites. It is ſtrange that the civil difference of ſtrangers and citizens ſhould make ſuch difference in the point of conſcience. Ought we not to hate the Lord's enemies with a perfect hatred, not as Engliſhmen, not as ſtrangers, but as enemies. Levi knew not his brother, this was his honour; but many now, for reſpect to their brethren, know not God. It is the moral quality that the law of God reſpects, without reſpect of perſons and countries. To be a citizen, if not qualified, doth no more plead for employment *in foro conſcientiæ* and before God, than to be a ſtranger and qualified doth impede truſt and employment *in foro conſcientiæ* and before God.

5. It may be anſwered (and it is by ſome), That thoſe ſcriptures plead, that there ſhould be no conjunction with wicked men in a quarrel of religion; but ſeeing our preſent buſineſs is the defence of the kingdom, all ſubjects, as ſubjects, ſtand in capacity of employment for that end, though in reference to the defence of religion there muſt be a choice.

Anſw. 1. The commiſſion have vindicated themſelves in a letter to Stirling preſbytery from that imputation, that it is ſaid, they ſtate the quarrel and cauſe merely upon civil things in the anſwer to the parliament's query. But certainly there is juſt ground given to theſe that are watching for any ſuch thing, to ſtate the cauſe ſo: becauſe they do contrary to all former cuſtom and practice, mention the defence of the kingdom only, as it had been of purpoſe, to make the employing of all members of the body or ſubjects of the kingdom for its defence more plauſible. But we anſwer to the point. The aſſociations and conjunctions that are condemned in the cited ſcriptures, are ſome of them for civil quarrels ſo far as we know; ſome of them in the point of juſt and neceſſary defence of the kingdom, and yet that doth not juſtify them. 2. The rule given them, Deut. xxiii. was regulating all their wars, and clearly holds forth, that all ſubjects, as ſubjects, and members of the politic body, though as ſuch there is an obligation lying on them to defend the whole; yet they are not in actual and neareſt capacity to the performance of that duty, if they be wicked and unclean. And the reaſon is, becauſe the Lord would have the wars of his people his own wars, and all that they do, to his glory, Num. xxi. 14. 2 Chron. xx. 15. Col. iii. 17.

More

More eſpecially ſuch ſolemn undertakings, there ought to be a difference between his people, acting for ſelf-defence, and other nations. 3. Although the defence of the kingdom and defence of the cauſe, be different in themſelves, yet are they inſeparable. Whoever is entruſted with the defence of the kingdom really and *de facto*, he is *eo ipſo* entruſted with the defence of the cauſe: Therefore the people of God, who ought always to have religion firſt in their eye, ought, eſpecially in raiſing forces for ſelf-preſervation, to level at religion, and direct the choice of inſtruments in relation to that mark, that they deſtroy not Chriſtians while they ſave ſubjects, and preſerve our bodies to deſtroy our ſouls.

3*d* Reaſon. That which is diſſonant from and contrary unto all our former reſolutions and proceedings, oaths and engagements, confeſſions and humiliations, muſt needs be moſt unlawful, or they themſelves, as to that point, were unlawful. But the preſent reſolutions and proceedings are diſſonant from, and contrary to all theſe. *Ergo*, Either our preſent or our former reſolutions and practices were unlawful; either we were wrong before, or we are not right now. The ſecond propoſition may be made manifeſt from, 1. The preſent reſolutions are contrary to the ſolemn league and covenant in the fourth article and the ſixth. To the fourth, becauſe we put power in the hands of a malignant party, power of the ſword, which is inconſiſtent in the own nature of it with either actual puniſhing of them, or endeavouring to bring them to puniſhment; unleſs it be intended to bring them all forth, and expoſe them to the ſlaughter for a ſacrifice for the land, which may be the Lord's mind indeed, howbeit they know not his thoughts. And to the ſixth article, becauſe it is a declining to the contrary party, even that party againſt whom the covenant was at the making expreſly contrived. And as the declaration of the General Aſſembly 1648 hath it, It is a joining with one enemy to beat another, with a black devil to beat a white.

It is moſt ingeniouſly anſwered, that the preſent reſolutions are not contrary to the covenant; becauſe ſuch as are deſcribed in the covenant are not allowed to be employed, meaning, that theſe men are not now malignants. What needs men make ſuch a compaſs to juſtify the public reſolutions, ſeeing there is ſo eaſy and ready a way ſtraight at hand? This one anſwer might take off all the arguments made againſt them, that there is no malignant party now; which is

the foundation that being removed, all the building muſt fall to the ground. But we have in the firſt article evinced that, which had been ſcandalous to have proved, if it had not been queſtioned. If it were indeed true, that no malignants are allowed to be employed, what needed the commiſſion in their letter to Stirling preſbytery take ſo much pains from ſcripture and reaſon to juſtify the preſent reſolutions, when the clearing of that one point had cleared all? As for the declaration of the Aſſembly, *anno* 1648, *It is anſwered, that none are to be employed, that continue notourly in the courſes of malignancy, which was done that year.* Whereas the malignant party that was then aſſociated with, would have engaged to be faithful to all the ends of the covenant, many of them were ſuch as had been in covenant, and made ſhew of their repentance for their defection from it: and ſo there is no difference in this particular.

2. The ſolemn acknowledgement of public ſins is ſo clear and peremptory in this, that it makes me tremble to think on it. *Pag.* 6. "Should we again break his commandments "and covenant, by joining any more in affinity with the "people of theſe abominations, and take in our boſom theſe "ſerpents, which have formerly ſtung us almoſt to death? "This, as it would argue much folly and madneſs, ſo, no "doubt, it would provoke the Lord to conſume us till there "be no remnant of eſcaping." Let the 6th article alſo be conſidered. Join to this the declaration of the commiſſion, upon report of this enemy's invading, *p.* 6. where it is declared, that malignants ſhall not be aſſociated with, nay, not countenanced and permitted to be in our armies. The General Aſſembly after this, upon the enemy's entry into Scotland, gives ſerious warning to the rulers, to take heed of ſnares from that party: and that the rather, becauſe men ordinarily are ſo taken with the ſenſe of danger, as not to look back to that which is behind them, *&c.* How often have we ſentenced ourſelves unto wrath and conſumption if we ſhall fall into this ſin again? All theſe and the like, are endeavoured to be taken off, by ſaying that our engagements in this point, were conceived in a way of proſecution of the cauſe; but to be no impediment of the juſt and neceſſary defence, which we are bound to by nature's law, which no human law can infringe.

But we reply, 1. It is ſtrange, our proſecution of the cauſe theſe years paſt, ſhould be contradiſtinguiſhed from the defence of it and the kingdom. It was conceived that our war in England

England was defenſive not invaſive, that it was neceſſitated for the defence even of our kingdom, but it ſeems it is now queſtioned; but paſſing what was acted abroad, certainly all our wars at home were merely defenſive, both againſt unjuſt invaſion and ſeditious inſurrections. Now our ſolemn engagements were conceived, in relation to our actings at home eſpecially, and modelling our armies for the defence of our liberties and religion. We know well enough that a juſt invaſive war is a rare accident in the world, and that the flock of Jeſus Chriſt is, for the moſt part, obnoxious to the violence of others, as ſheep among wolves: but are not often called to prey upon others. 2. To call our ſolemn engagements and declarations, grounded upon our oaths and the word of God, human laws and conſtitutions, that muſt cede to Nature's law, it is indeed ingenuous dealing: becauſe to juſtify the preſent proceedings, there can be no more expedient way, than to condemn bypaſt reſolutions for the peremptorineſs of them, and to make them grounded on politic conſiderations, which are alterable: But it imports a great change of principles. We conceive that all human laws that are not for the matter grounded on the word of God, that oblige not conſcience but in the caſe of ſcandal, and in regard of the general end, are alterable and changeable, whenever they come in oppoſition to the law of nature, ſelf-defence, and the law of God written in his word. And therefore that act of parliament, mentioned by the commiſſion, diſcharging all ſubjects not to riſe without the king's command, which was made uſe of againſt our firſt taking arms, was no ways binding on the ſubjects to riſe in the defence of their religion and liberties when in hazard. And we wonder that that law ſhould be compared to our ſolemn engagements, which are grounded upon oaths and God's word, as touching the very matter and ſubſtance of them, as if our engagements did no more bind us now, in caſe of defence, than that law did bind us then. Royaliſts might be excuſed for preferring the king's will to God's; but we cannot be pardoned for equalling them: And eſpecially while we conſider that that fore-mentioned act undoubtedly hath been intended for the eſtabliſhing of an arbitrary and abſolute power in the king's hand, that the ſubjects may not have liberty to ſave themſelves, except the king will. Where God hath given us liberty by the law of nature, or his word, no king can juſtly tie us; and when God binds and obliges us by any of theſe,

no king or parliament can looſe or untie us. 3. The declaration of the Commiſſion and Aſſembly upon this invaſion, renews the ſame bond of our former engagements; yea, and ſpeaks expreſly, in the caſe of fewneſs and ſcarceneſs of inſtruments, againſt the unbelief of people that are ready in danger to chooſe any help. Therefore that which is ſaid in anſwer, that at that time there was a choice of inſtruments which now is not, it may indeed condemn and falſify the declarations at that time, in the ſuppoſition of the paucity of inſtruments, and in the application of that doctrine and divine truth to that time, but it doth not ſpeak any thing againſt the application of that truth therein contained in our time; it being more manifeſt, that we have greater neceſſity and leſs choice of inſtruments, and ſo in greater hazard of unbelief, and overlooking what is behind us.

3. It is of all conſiderations the moſt confounding, to reflect upon our former humiliations and faſts. How often hath it been confeſſed to God, as the predominant public ſin of Scotland, countenancing and employing the malignant party? But when we call particularly to mind the firſt ſolemn faſt after the defeat at Dunbar, aſtoniſhment takes hold on us, to think, that it is now defended as a duty, which, but ſome months ago, was ſolemnly confeſſed as a ſin, the not purging of the army, the obſtructing of that work, and great inclinations to keep in and fetch in ſuch perſons, and the repining at, and crying out againſt all that was done in the contrary, was then reckoned as the great cauſe of God's wrath, and his ſad ſtroke upon us. What diſtraction may this breed in the hearts of the people of the land, to hear the ſame thing complained of as a great ſin to-day, and commended as a neceſſary duty to-morrow? Is not all the land preſently called to mourn for the king's ſins, of which this is one, the deſigning a conjunction with the malignant party, and giving them warrant to riſe in arms for the defence of the kingdom? Now, how ſhall they be able to reconcile theſe in their own minds, at the ſame time to mourn for that as a ſin in the king, which they hear commended as the duty of the parliament? To faſt to-day for that as the king's ſin, which they muſt go about to-morrow as their own duty? *Tell it not in Gath, publiſh it not in Aſkelon, leſt the daughters of the Philiſtines rejoice.* Heathens may riſe in judgment againſt this generation. *Semper idem velle atque idem nolle hæc demum ſapientia*

ſapientia eſt. If any wiſe man be *ubique & ſemper ſibi par & idem*, what ought a godly man to be?

4*th* Reaſon. That which is an uncertain mean of preſervation of the kingdom, and a more certain mean of deſtruction of religion, is utterly unlawful. But the employing and entruſting of all men promiſcuouſly, according as is holden out in the public reſolutions, is, at beſt, an uncertain mean of the preſervation of the kingdom, and is a more certain mean of the deſtruction of religion. *Ergo*, It is utterly unlawful. The firſt propoſition cannot be denied. When any leſs good comes in oppoſition with a greater good, the leſſer good in that reſpect becomes evil. We may not endanger certainly a greater good, for the probable and uncertain attainment of the leſſer. The ſecond propoſition I know will be denied, as it was denied in the time of the engagement by the committee of eſtates. They ſaid, the danger of religion was not infallible, that it might eventually fall out ſo, but not by any caſuality. And thus it is pleaded now, That the danger of religion is not inevitable; that the danger of the kingdom is certain: and ſo theſe being laid in the balance together, we ought, to eſchew a certain danger of the kingdom's deſtruction, rather hazard on a probable danger of religion.

But we ſhall clear this and confirm the reaſon. 1. The danger of the kingdom is indeed great; but it is not ſo certain and inevitable in caſe of not employing the malignant party; becauſe there may be ſome competency of power beſide. Now the delivery and preſervation of the kingdom from this danger, by conjunction with that party, is rather improbable; becauſe we have ſentenced ourſelves to deſtruction, if ever we ſhould do ſuch a thing again. We are ſtanding under a curſe, whereto we have bound over ourſelves; and beſide, God is in a ſpecial manner purſuing that generation, and hath raiſed up this enemy for their deſtruction; ſo that we may with greater probability expect to partake of their plagues, and to fall under our own curſe, than to be delivered, or be inſtruments of deliverance to the kingdom. Or, at the beſt, it is uncertain: for what is more uncertain than the event of war? The battle in this ſenſe may be ſaid peculiarly to belong to the Lord. Now on the other hand, the danger of religion is certain and inevitable, though not ſimply in itſelf, and abſolutely, (becauſe the Lord doth in heaven and earth what he pleaſes), yet with a moral certainty and infallibility, which is often as great as phyſical certainty. Suppoſe theſe

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men, having the power of the ſword, prevail, will they not employ it according to their principles, and for attaining their own ends, which both are deſtructive to religion? What is more certain than that men act and ſpeak from the abundance of the heart, when there is no outward reſtraint? It ſhould be a great wonder if they who are ſo accuſtomed to do evil, ſhould ceaſe to do evil, when they have power and convenience to do it. Power and greatneſs hath corrupted many good men, ſhall it convert them? Can men expect other fruits from a tree than the nature of it yields? Will one ſeek figs on thorns, or grapes on thiſtles? 2. We do not ſee what defence it can be, for the preſent, to the kingdom, at leaſt the godly and well affected in the kingdom, who will be as much troubled in their perſons and eſtates by that party, as by the common enemy. It is known what threatenings the country is filled with, which vents that inveterate malice and hatred to all the well affected in the kingdom, which they have kept within their breaſt of a long time: and now they find opportunity of outing it. It is as clear as day light, that the moſt part of all the ſecluded perſons look upon theſe that oppoſed them in the engagement, and ſhut them out of places of truſt, and capacity of employment, as enemies, and as great enemies as the ſectaries. And that we may know what to expect when they have full power in their hands, they have already ſo lift up their head, that no godly man can promiſe himſelf ſecurity in many places; and eſpecially the faithful gentlemen and people of the Weſt, who have given more proof of their faithfulneſs to the cauſe and kingdom againſt the common enemy, than any others in the land; yet are daily ſuffering violence from theſe preſervators of the kingdom, while they are ſufferers under the feet of the enemy. When they have no common enemy, whom, I beſeech you, will they prey upon, ſeeing they do it already while they have an enemy?

But it is replied, That none of the leaſt ſuſpicion are allowed to be in ſuch truſt and power, as may be prejudicial to religion; and that an oath is to be taken of all, which is to be conceived as particular, binding and ſtrict as poſſible.

Anſw. 1. What a manifeſt receding is it from former principles, that it is now conceived, that all places of truſt, excepting ſome few of eminent note, may be filled with ſecluded and debarred perſons, without the prejudice of religion? It is certain that moſt part of officers, nominated by the parliament and ſhires, are not only ſuch, of whom there is juſt ground

of

of ſuſpicion, but ſuch as have been enemies by actual oppoſition to the cauſe of God, or known underminers thereof. Can it be ſaid in good earneſt, that none, of whom is any ſuſpicion, ſhall have ſuch truſt as may be prejudicial? Sure we are, there are many juſt grounds of ſuſpicion and jealouſy of general perſons, who have chief truſt in our armies: and this the public judicatories are not ignorant of. 2. Oaths and covenants are but like green cords about Samſon to bind theſe men. Would we have them yet once again perjured; then may we tender an oath to them. Put power in their hand, and then make them ſwear to employ it well. 'Tis as ridiculous as to give a madman a ſword, and then perſuade him to hurt none with it. There is no more capitulation with ſuch perſons, retaining their old principles, than with the floods or winds. Theſe whom that ſacred bond of covenant hath not tied, what oath can bind? Except you can change their nature, do not ſwear them to good behaviour. Can a leopard change his ſpots?

5*th* Reaſon. That which gives great offence and ſcandal, and lays a ſtumbling-block in the way, both of the people of the land and our enemies, eſpecially in the way of the godly; that is unlawful. But the preſent aſſociation and conjunction with all perſons in the kingdom (excepting a few, if any) is ſcandalous and offenſive to the whole land, to the godly eſpecially, and alſo to the enemy: therefore it is unlawful. The major is beyond all exception, if we conſider how peremptory Chriſt and his apoſtles are in the point of offence which yet few Chriſtians do conſider. We ought not only to beware of the offence of the godly, but even of wicked men, even of our blaſpheming enemies. *Give no offence neither to the Jew nor Gentile, nor to the church of God.* Chriſt would not offend and ſcandalize his malicious enemies. The minor is proved. 1. There is great offence given to the godly in the kingdom by the public reſolutions, concerning that conjunction with the malignant party, under the name and notion of ſubjects. 1. Becauſe it is known that the moſt part of them are tender in that point, what fellowſhip they act with: and this hath been remonſtrate unto the commiſſion and committee of eſtates, from ſeveral ſynods. Now the preſent reſolution layeth that ſtumbling-block in their way, that they cannot act in the defence of the kingdom: becauſe there is no way left them, for the performing of that duty, but that which they in their conſciences are not ſatisfied

fied with. It is a ſad neceſſity and ſnare that is put upon them, that they cannot perform their bound duty, which they are moſt deſirous of, without ſin, becauſe of the way that is taken. 2. Is it not matter of offence and ſtumbling to them, to be neceſſitated by law to that which was their affliction? The mixture that was in our armies was their grief; and their comfort was that the judicatories were minting at their duty to purge them: but now there is no hope of attaining that; all doors are ſhut up by the public reſolutions. 3. It undoubtedly will weaken their hands, and make their hearts faint; ſo that they cannot pray with affection and in faith, for a bleſſing upon ſuch an army, the predominant and leading part whereof have been eſteemed, and are really enemies to God and his people. 4. Is it not a great offence that any thing ſhould proceed from the public judicatories, that ſhall lay a neceſſity upon many godly in the land, to ſuffer, becauſe they cannot in conſcience go along with it? Next it ſcandalizeth the whole land. What may they think within themſelves, to ſee ſuch diſſonancy and diſagreement between preſent and former reſolutions and practices? What may they judge of the inconſtancy and levity of the commiſſion? and be induced to give no reſpect and reverence to them in their reſolutions. Is it not, at leaſt, a very great appearance of evil to join with that party, that we did declare and repute, but ſome few weeks ſince, to be wicked enemies of religion and the kingdom? and look henceforth on them as friends without ſo much as any acknowledgement of their ſin had from them? Shall not they be induced to put no difference between the precious and the vile? not to diſcern between him that fears God and him that fears him not, when the public reſolutions put no difference? Then, how will it confirm all the malignant party in their wickedneſs? May they not think our ſolemn vows and engagements, our rigid reſolutions and proceedings were but all contrived and acted of policy; and that intereſt and advantage, and not conſcience, principled them? Have they not an occaſion given them to perſecute all the godly, and vent their long harboured malice againſt theſe who have been moſt zealous for reformation and purging of the land? Nay, they are put in the capacity that they have deſired, for acting all their reſolutions, and accompliſhing their deſigns. And laſt of all, the preſent proceedings will not only encourage and animate the common enemy, but confirm them in all the imputations

putations and calumnies they have loaded our church with. May they not have ground to think, that we are but driving on a politic deſign and does not ſingly aim at God's glory? That it is not grounds of conſcience acts us, but ſome worldly intereſt, when they look upon the inconſtancy and changeableneſs of our way and courſe, which is ſo accommodated to occaſions and times? Can they think us men of conſcience, that will join with all theſe men of blood, before we will ſo much as ſpeak with them? It is replied, that the ſcandal is taken, and not given; which muſt not be ſtood upon, in the caſe of a neceſſary duty. But, 1. We cleared, that there is no neceſſity of that conjunction; therefore the ſcandal is given, ſeeing it is known beforehand that it will be taken. 2. There are many grounds of offence given by the preſent reſolutions, as appears by what is ſaid. If it were no more, it is a great appearance of evil; it is very inductive of many evils; a moſt fit occaſion of all that is ſpoken; and beſides, it is in itſelf ſinful; contrary to God's, and our oaths.

6th Reaſon. That which makes glad all the wicked and enemies of God in the land, and ſad many, if not moſt part, of the godly, hath much appearance and evidence, if not certainty, of evil, is unlawful. But the public reſolutions and proceedings are ſuch. *Ergo*—Or thus: That which makes glad all the wicked, and heightens the hopes and expectations of the malignant party, and makes ſad none almoſt but the godly, and diſcourages their ſpirits; that, proceeding from the public judicatories, cannot be right and lawful: But ſo it is, that that which proceeds from the public judicatories, makes glad all the hearts of the wicked, and makes ſad none, almoſt, but the godly; heightens the hopes of the malignants, and makes them ſay, their day is coming, *Lo we have ſeen it*: and diſcourages the godly, and makes them almoſt ſay, *Our hope is cut off, our glory is departed.* *Ergo*, It cannot be right, at leaſt it hath a great and convincing appearance of evil.

This argument may be thought more popular, than either philoſophical or ſcriptural: But ſuch an argument the General Aſſembly, 1648, made uſe of againſt the engagement. It is no ways imaginable, how the wicked and ungodly in the land, would ſo inſult and rejoice in this day, if they ſaw not ſome legible characters upon it, which were agreeable to their own principles and ends. The children of God are, for the moſt part, *Led by the Spirit of God, and taught the way they ſhould chooſe*, John xvi. 13. Pſal. xxv. 12. So that readily

they do not ſkunner at courſes approven of God: But the children of the world being, at beſt, led by their own carnal minds and ſenſes, and, for the moſt part, acted by a ſpirit of diſobedience and enmity againſt God, they uſe not to rejoice at things that do not ſuit with their carnal hearts, and are not engraven with the character of that which is imprinted in their ſpirits. We ſee now *that the wicked walk on every ſide, when the vileſt men are exalted. And when the wicked riſe, the righteous is hidden; and when they bear rule, the people mourneth: but when righteous men are in authority, the people do rejoice: and when the righteous rejoiceth, there is great glory*, Pſal. xii. 8. Prov. xxviii. 12. and xxix. 2.

7th Reaſon. That which is the accompliſhment and perfecting of the malignant deſign, that hath been driven on theſe years paſt, eſpecially ſince the unlawful engagement, it cannot be a courſe approven of God: But the preſent courſe is the accompliſhment of that deſign. *Ergo*, That there hath been a deſign, for a long time, driven and endeavoured, both at home and abroad, with much policy and induſtry, by many turnings and windings, and by arguments of ſeveral kinds, as the exigence of the times did furniſh: and that the deſign was, to have all ſuch perſons in truſt and power again, who had been ſecluded, that ſo they might compaſs their own ends, hath not been denied hitherto; and we are perſuaded no man that fears God, and obſerves the times, is ignorant of it. Let the public papers of the treaty at Breda, and the public papers of this kingdom and church at home, be conſulted; they bear witneſs for us. Was not the foundation of it laid in Holland? Many of them in both nations, brought home with the king contrary to public reſolutions, and by the prevailing influence of ſome in the ſtate, kept in the kingdom, contrary to public reſolutions? Was not the work of purging judicatories and armies obſtructed; the godly diſcountenanced and diſcouraged; great endeavours uſed to raiſe the malignants in the South and in England; and, ſince the defeat, to raiſe all without exception in the North, but when that could not be obtained, by the withſtanding of honeſt men in the ſtate? The levies appointed, which would have been a conſiderable force for the defence of the kingdom, was rendered wholly ineffectual; partly by taking money for men; partly by raiſing the malignant party, and then pretending to go againſt them: They were pacified by an act of indemnity, the fruit and reſult of all which is, this

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preſent conjunction with them, and putting the power of judicatories and armies in their hand. Thus the deſign is compleated.

8*th* Reaſon. That which will increaſe the Lord's indignation and controverſy againſt the land, yet ſeven times more, that is very unlawful and unſeaſonable: But ſo it is, that confederacy and aſſociation with the people of theſe abominations, will increaſe the Lord's indignation and controverſy ſeven times more. *Ergo*, The aſſumption was as manifeſt and uncontroverted as the propoſition, a few months ago, but it is begun now to be queſtioned by ſome, *qui quod ſciunt neſciunt, quia ſapiunt*. But we ſhall evince it. 1. We are ſtanding under ſuch a ſentence, which we deliberately and ſincerely paſt upon ourſelves, in the days of our vows to God, that if we did ever any more join with the people of theſe abominations, the Lord would conſume us till there was no remnant. And this was not done in raſhneſs but in ſobriety, and with a ſcripture preſident, Ezra ix. 12, 13. 2. Our experience hath made this clear to us. We never did mingle ourſelves among them, but the Lord did purſue us with indignation, and ſtamped that ſin, as in vive characters, upon our judgment. God hath ſet upon that rock, that we have ſo oft ſpit upon, a remarkable beacon. Therefore we do not only in our ſolemn engagements, bind ourſelves over to a curſe, in caſe of relapſing, but paſſes the ſentence of great madneſs and folly on ourſelves. *Piſcator ictu ſapit*. Experience makes fools wiſe, but it cannot cure madneſs. Did not that mixture provoke God at Dunbar? And is this the way to appeaſe him, to revolt more and more? 3. Conjunction and confederacy with that party, doth neceſſarily infer a communion in bleſſings and plagues; we muſt caſt in our lot with them, and have all one purſe. Now it hath been confeſſed and declared by this church, that God hath a notable controverſy with that party, that this enemy is in an eminent way to bear them down and cruſh them. Therefore if we join with them, we muſt reſolve to partake of their plagues, and have that controverſy pleaded againſt us alſo.

It is anſwered, That indignation need not be feared ſimply on this account, becauſe the means are lawful and neceſſary; elſe, if this have any force, it will conclude, that we ſhould lie down and do nothing, becauſe God's indignation is upon the whole land.

But we reply, 1. Though it be true, that this enemy is the

rod of God's indignation againſt the whole land; yet it is certain to us, and hath been formerly unqueſtioned, that they are raiſed up, in a ſpecial way, to execute God's wrath on malignants, and God doth arm them with power in a ſignal manner for that end. Beſides, the Lord's anger and indignation againſt his enemies is ſuch, as will burn and none can quench it: it is of another nature than his wrath againſt his own people, which is a hiding of his face for a moment. He corrects us in meaſure and judgment, but leaves us not altogether unpuniſhed: But he makes an end of other nations, eſpecially theſe that riſe up to actual enmity and hatred of his people, and ſhedding of their blood. And therefore, if any man would not meet with wrath and ſore diſpleaſure, he would ſtand at a diſtance with ſuch, as God hath appointed for deſtruction; we mean, as long as they carry in their foreheads the mark of the beaſt. When God hath ſuch a remarkable controverſy againſt a people, then *he that helpeth and he that is helped, ſhall both fall together*, Iſa. xxxi. 3. All that is in league with them, ſhall fall with them by the ſword, Ezek. xxx. 5. and xxxii. 21. 2. Since it is known that the malignant party have not changed their principles, and ſo they cannot but in proſecuting this war eſtabliſh their old quarrel and follow it, *to wit*, The king's arbitrary power; the intereſt of man above God's, or the kingdom's intereſt. We leave it to be judged impartially, whether or not theſe that aſſociate with them, do eſpouſe that quarrel and intereſt, at leaſt expoſe themſelves to all that wrath and indignation, which hath hitherto followed that quarrel, ſeeing they muſt have common bleſſings and curſes? Will not that quarrel held up by moſt part of the army, be *a wicked thing*, an *Achan in the camp*, that will make God turn away from it and put Iſrael to ſhame?

Having thus eſtabliſhed the truth, in the next place, we come to take off what objections are made to the contrary.

Firſt, It is argued from human authority. The uncontroverted and univerſal practiſe of all nations in all generations, is, to employ all ſubjects in the caſe of neceſſary juſt defence. It was the practice of our reformers, who took into the congregation, and received all that, upon acknowledgement of their error, was willing to join, though they had been on the contrary faction. Such an univerſal practice of Chriſtian nations, though it be not the ground of our faith, yet it is apparent that it cannot want reaſon for it.

Anſw.

Anſw. 1. This will plead as much againſt the exceptions added in the anſwer to the query and act of levy; for ſeeing other nations except none, in the caſe of neceſſary defence, why ſhould we except any? And if once we except any, upon good and convincing grounds, upon the ſame ground we ought to except far more. 2. Mr. Gilleſpie, in his Treatiſe of Miſcellany Queſtions, makes mention that the city of Straſburg, 1626, made a defenſive league with Zurich, Berne, and Baſil; becauſe they were not only neighbours, but men of the ſame religion. And the elector of Saxony refuſed to take into confederacy, theſe who differed from him in the point of the Lord's ſupper; leſt ſuch ſad things ſhould befal him, as befel theſe in ſcripture, who uſed any means of their own defence. This rule was good *in Theſi*, though in that caſe miſapplied. Now then, if they made conſcience of chooſing means of their own defence, a confederacy with foreigners; may not the ſame ground lead us to a diſtance with our own countrymen, as unqualified, who have nothing to commend them but that they are of the ſame nation, which is nothing in point of conſcience. 3. The practice of other nations, that are not tender in many greater points, cannot be very convincing: eſpecially, when we conſider that the Lord hath made light to ariſe, in this particular, more bright than in former times. God hath taken occaſion of illuſtrating and commending many truths unto us in this generation, from the darkneſs of error, and of making ſtraight many rules, from the crookedneſs of mens practice and walking. Is not the Lord now performing the promiſe of *purging out the rebels* from among us *and them that tranſgreſs?* God hath winked at former times of ignorance, but now, the Lord having cleared his mind ſo to us, how great madneſs were it *to forſake our own mercy, and deſpiſe the counſel of God againſt our own ſouls?* As for that inſtance of our reformers, there could not have been any thing brought more prejudicial to that cauſe, and more advantageous for us. After they were twice beaten by the French in Leith, and their forces ſcattered, and the leaders and chief men of the congregation forced to retire to Stirling; John Knox, preaching upon the eightieth pſalm, and ſearching the cauſes of God's wrath againſt them, he condeſcends upon this as the chief cauſe, That they had received into their councils and forces, ſuch men as had formerly oppoſed the congregation; and ſays, God never bleſt them ſince the Duke had come among them. See

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Knox' Chron. 2. It cannot be ſhewed that ever they took in a party and faction of ſuch men, but only ſome few perſons; which, though it was not altogether juſtifiable, yet more excuſable. But now the public reſolutions hold forth a conjunction with all the bloody murderers in the kingdom (excepting very few), and theſe without profeſſion of repentance in many, and without evidence of the reality of it almoſt in any. 3 Theſe perſons were not ſuch as had once joined with the congregation, and relapſed and become enemies to it; but they turned to the proteſtant religion from popery; But ours is a different caſe.

2. It is argued from ſcripture. Three ſcripture inſtances are brought to juſtify the preſent proceedings. The firſt inſtance is from the practice of God's people in the book of Judges, who, when for defection from religion they were brought under oppreſſion, yet when any governor was raiſed by God for their defence, they gathered and came all out promiſcuouſly, notwithſtanding a great part of them had been in the defection; yet it is not found that their governors are reproved for this, but rather ſad curſes on them that came not out to the work, Judges v. 15, 16, 17, 23. The ſecond inſtance is from the ſtory of the kings, very like the firſt; when, after defection, gracious reforming kings aroſe, and had to do againſt foreign invaſion, we find them not debarring any ſubjects, but calling them out promiſcuouſly: Neither is this laid to their charge, that they called out ſuch and ſuch ſubjects, though we may perceive by the ſtory of the prophets, that the greater part of the body of the people were wicked, *&c.*

We anſwer to theſe two inſtances jointly. 1. We may by the like reaſon prove, that which is as yet uncontroverted (we know not how long), That we ought at no time to make choice of inſtruments, neither in caſe of proſecution of the cauſe and the invaſion of others, nor yet in the time when choice is to be had; and ſo, that all our former engagements, reſolutions and proceedings, in the point of purging judicatories and armies, was ſuperfluous and ſupererogatory: becauſe we read not that the reforming kings or judges, whenever they had an invaſive war, and in the times that they had greateſt plenty and multitudes of people, did ever debar any of their ſubjects from that ſervice, but called them out promiſcuouſly. Neither is this laid to their charge; though we may perceive that the greater part of the people were

were wicked under the beſt kings: therefore we may lawfully employ any ſubjects of the kingdom in any of our wars. And we may look upon all indifferently, without any diſcerning of perſons that fear God and them that fear him not, as in good capacity to be entruſted, even when otherwiſe we have choice of inſtruments. Certainly it follows, by parity of reaſon: for if you conclude that, from the calling forth all promiſcuouſly, and no reproof given for it in the caſe of neceſſary defence; then we may conclude, from the calling forth of all promiſcuouſly, and in the caſe of an invaſive war, and no reproof recorded, that neither, in ſuch a caſe, it is ſinful to make no difference, and that with ſtrong reaſon: becauſe it being more eaſy in ſuch a caſe to chooſe inſtruments and no neceſſity pleading for it: if it had been ſinful, the prophets would have rather reproved it, than rebuked them for uſing ſuch means in a caſe of neceſſity. 2. We may argue after that manner, that in the caſe of neceſſary juſt defence, there ſhould be no exceptions made at all of any perſons; becauſe we read not that the judges or kings debarred any ſubjects, neither that they were rebuked for ſo doing. Therefore the inſtances militate as much againſt the exceptions added in the anſwer to the query, as againſt us; unleſs it be ſaid that there was no ſuch perſons among that people, which were as groundleſs raſhneſs as to ſay that they gave all evidence of repentance. 3. Seeing the judges and reforming kings of Judah, were ſo accurate and exact in cleaving to the law of God, and walking according to it in all other things; it were more charitable and Chriſtian judgment to ſay, that ſince they are not reproved for any fault in particular, that they were alſo exact to walk according to the rule, Deut. xxiii. in ſo great a point as this. 4. Mens practice is often lame and crooked, and therefore muſt be examined according to the rule; but it were not fair dealing to accommodate the rule to mens practice. Seeing then we have ſo clear and perfect a rule, Deut. xxiii. which muſt judge both their practice and ours; we ſee not how their practice can be obtruded as a rule upon us, which itſelf muſt be examined according to a common and general rule. If it be not according to that law, we hold it to be ſinful in itſelf, and ſo no preſident for us, albeit the prophets did not reprove it in expreſs and particular terms (as they did not reprove man-ſtealing, *&c.*) yet they rebuked it by conſequence in as far as they rebuked the kings for aſſociation with wick-

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ed Iſraelites, which is condemned upon grounds common to this very caſe in hand. 5. We ſee not any ground for ſuch promiſcuous calling forth of the people by the judges. Barak's buſineſs, as that of Jepthah and Gideon, was done by no great multitudes of people, but a few choice men. 6. As the oppreſſion was heavy and continued long; ſo the repentance of the people was ſolemn, and their deliverance a fruit of this. 7. Their caſe and ours is very different; none of Iſrael or Judah, did fight againſt the profeſſion of the true religion, and ſhed the blood of their fellow-ſubjects who were for the defence of the ſame. Iſrael in the days of the judges, and Judah in the time of the reforming kings, was not divided the one half againſt the other, upon oppoſition and defence of the true religion; and the better part, after many experiences of the treachery and enmity of the moſt of the worſt part, ſolemnly engaged to God, not to admit them to employment and truſt, but upon real evidence of repentance, of which they ſhould judge as in the ſight of God. And laſt of all, did ever Iſrael or Judah, in the days of their judges and reforming kings, admit into their armies, a party and faction of ſuch as had given no real evidence of their abandoning their former courſe; and ſuch a party, as had been long ſtudying to get the power of armies and judicatories in their own hands for attaining their own ends? But all thoſe are in our caſe.

The third inſtance from ſcripture, is from 1 Sam. xi. which is alledged to be a clear practice, and ſtamped with divine approbation. In the caſe of Jabeſh-Gilead beſieged by a foreign enemy, Saul commands all to come forth for defence of their brethren, under pain of a ſevere civil cenſure. Now, what Saul did in this buſineſs, the Spirit of God is ſaid to act him to it, and what the people did, was from the fear of God, making them obey the king: And then Samuel in this acting concurs jointly, and makes no oppoſition; and laſt of all, the people came forth as one man; and yet chap. x. 27. many men of Belial were among them, who malignantly oppoſed Saul's government, contrary to God's revealed will.

To which we anſwer, 1. The ſtamp of divine approbation is not apparent to us, ſucceſs doth not prove it; neither the Spirit coming on Saul, nor the fear of God falling on the people, will import a divine approbation of all that was done in the managing that war. That motion of the Spirit is no

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ſanctifying motion; but a common, though extraordinary, impulſe of Saul's ſpirit to the preſent work, which, doubtleſs, was in the king of Babylon, whom God raiſed up, fitted and ſent for the deſtruction of many nations: albeit that work in his hand was iniquity. That fear of God that fell upon the people, was but a fear of the king imprinted by God, and it is more peculiarly attributed to God, becauſe the people did deſpiſe and contemn him, which makes their reverence and fear to be a more extraordinary thing upon a ſudden. Then, Samuel not oppoſing the courſe in hand, doth no more import his approbation of all that was done in it, than his not reproving the men of Belial, doth prove that he approved of their oppoſition. 2. It doth not appear that the men of Belial were a great faction and party; there is ſomething in *ver.* 12. ſpeaks againſt it. It is not like the people would put a faction and party to death. 3. Neither doth it appear that they were in the army; for that which is ſaid, that all the people came out as one man, doth only import, that the body and generality of them came forth; and that it was a wonder ſo many came forth ſo ſuddenly at the command of the king, who was but mean and abject in their eyes. It is certain that all ſenſible people were not preſent, becauſe the whole army being numbered, *ver.* 8. was but 330,000. And who will ſay there was no more men in Iſrael, when they had 600,000 ſuch, and above, before their coming into the land? Seeing then, many have ſtaid at home, it is moſt probable that theſe men of Belial would not come, ſeeing they deſpiſed Saul's mean and low condition in their heart, and thought him unfit to lead their armies, till he ſhould prove what was in him. That which is ſaid, *ver.* 12. doth not prove they were in the camp; it might be conveniently ſpoken of abſent perſons. 4. It is not certain that theſe men were wicked and ſcandalous in their converſation; haters of godlineſs and of their brethren; but that they ſtood at diſtance only with Saul, in the point of his election; which indeed was blame-worthy, ſeeing God had revealed his mind in it: and therefore they are called Men of Belial, as Peter was called Satan, for oppoſing Chriſt's ſuffering.

Some other ſcriptures are alledged by ſome, as David's employing of ſuch men, *&c.* all which are cleared in Mr. Gilleſpie's Treatiſe of Miſcellany Queſtions, queſt. 14.

3. It is argued from reaſon. And, 1. That which any is obliged to do for another's preſervation by the law of God

and nature, and which he cannot omit without the guilt of the other's deſtruction, that may the other lawfully require of him to do when he needs it, and when it may be done without the undoing of a greater good; but ſo it is, that every ſubject is obliged by the law of nature, oath and covenants, and the law of God, to endeavour to their power, the preſervation of the kingdom againſt unjuſt violence: And the ſafety of the kingdom ſtands in need of many ſubjects' aſſiſtance who were ſecluded; and it may be done without undoing a greater good than is the preſervation of religion. *Ergo,*

This argument hath an anſwer to it in the boſom of it. 1. We ſhortly deny the aſſumption, in relation to the two laſt branches, both that the kingdom's preſervation ſtands in neceſſity of theſe mens help: And that their help tends not to the undoing of a greater good, ſeeing there is no reaſon given to confirm theſe two points, wherein the nerve of the buſineſs lies, we refer to a Reaſon of our denial of them given *p.* 29. 2. It is true that the obligation to ſuch a duty lies upon all; but that obligation is to be brought in act and exerciſe in an orderly and qualified way, elſe what needed any exceptions be in the act of levy? Excommunicated perſons are under the ſame obligation, yet the magiſtrate is not actually obliged to call ſuch, but rather to ſeclude them. Are not all bound to come to the ſacrament who are church members? yet many are not in a capacity to come, and ſo ought neither to preſume to come, nor be admitted. Are not all ſubjects obliged to defend the cauſe of God, and to proſecute it? and yet many, becauſe of their enmity to the cauſe of God, are actually incapable of employment in the defence or proſecution thereof. 3. The law of nature is above all human laws and conſtitutions, they muſt cede whenever they come in oppoſition to it, *Salus populi* is *ſuprema Lex* in relation to theſe: But in relation to the law of God it is not ſo; ſometimes the law of nature muſt yield to poſitive commands of God. Abraham muſt ſacrifice his ſon at God's command. The law of nature obliges us to the preſervation of ourſelves, but it does not oblige to every mean that may be found expedient to that end, unleſs it be ſuppoſed lawful and approven of God. Therefore the Lord in his written word doth determine, what means we may uſe for that end, and what not. But, 4. We conceive that the law forbidding aſſociation and confederacy with known wicked

ed and ungodly perſons, is included in the law of nature, as well as the law that obliges us to ſelf-preſervation; that is grounded on perpetual reaſon, as well as this. Nature bids me preſerve myſelf, and nature binds me to have one friend and foe with God. The heathens had a notion of it; they obſerved, that Amphiaraus, a wiſe and virtuous man, was therefore ſwallowed up in the earth, with ſeven men and ſeven horſes, becauſe he had joined himſelf and aſſociated with Tydeus, Capaneus and other wicked commanders marching to the ſiege of Thebe. Mr. Gill. Miſcell. Queſt. chap. 14. *p.* 171.

2. The ſecond reaſon is framed thus *in Hypotheſi*. Such as are excluded are a great part, if not the greater part, of the remnant of the land, if rules of excluſion be extended impartially. Now, they having their lives and liberties allowed them, muſt either in theſe things be enſured by the interpoſing of a competent power for their defence, or elſe they muſt have liberty to act for themſelves. But ſo it is, that we cannot interpoſe a competent power for their protection. *Ergo*, They muſt have liberty to act for themſelves. *Nam qui dat vitam, dat neceſſaria ad vitam.*

We anſwer, 1. It is not certain that ſuch as are excluded are the greater part of the land; however, it is certain, that though the rule had been kept, and endeavours had been uſed to walk according to it, yet many whom it excludes would have been taken in. There is a great difference between endeavour of duty, and attaining its perfection. If the rule had not been quite deſtroyed, ſo great offence could not have been taken, though it had not been ſtrictly urged in all particulars. 2. We ſtill affirm, upon evident grounds to us, that there is a power competent in the land, beſide the malignant party, which may protect the land and enſure their lives and liberties. 3. We are perſuaded many of that party, who have been ſo deeply involved in blood guiltineſs and barbarous cruelties, ſhould neither have lives nor liberties ſecured to them: becauſe they ought not to be permitted to live. But the not taking away ſo much guilty blood from the land by acts of juſtice, is the cauſe that ſo much innocent and precious blood is now ſhed. Our rulers have pardoned that blood which God would not pardon: and therefore would not pardon it to the land, becauſe they pardoned it to the murderers.

Sect. 4. *That it is not lawfull for the well affected ſubjects to concur in ſuch an engagement in war, and aſſociate with the malignant party.*

SOME convinced of the unlawfulneſs of the public reſolutions and proceedings, in reference to the employing of the malignant party, yet do not find ſuch clearneſs and ſatisfaction in their own conſciences as to forbid the ſubjects to concur in this war, and aſſociate with the army ſo conſtituted. Therefore it is needful to ſpeak ſomething to this point, *That it is as unlawful for the ſubjects to aſſociate and join in arms with that party, as it is for the parliament to employ them.* For theſe reaſons.

1. The ſcriptures before cited againſt aſſociations and confederacies with wicked and ungodly men do prove this. The command prohibiting conjunction with them and converſing, *&c.* is common both to magiſtrates and people: for the ground of it is common to both. *The peoples enſnaring, helping of the ungodly,* &c. It were ſtrange doctrine to ſay, that it is not lawful for the parliament to aſſociate in war with the malignants, leſt the people be enſnared: and yet it is lawful for the people to aſſociate with them upon the command of the parliament, ſeeing the enſnaring of the people hath a more immediate connexion with the peoples conjunction with them, nor with the parliament's reſolution about it. Had it not been a tranſgreſſion in all the people to have joined with theſe men before the parliament's reſolution about it? How then can their reſolution intervening looſe the people from their obligation to God's command? Shall it be no ſin to me, becauſe they ſin before me? Can their going before me in the tranſgreſſion, exempt me from the tranſgreſſion of that ſame law which obliges both them and me? 2. The people were reproved for ſuch aſſociations as well as rulers, though they originated from the rulers. The prophets ſpeak to the whole body. *What haſt thou to do in the way of Egypt,* &c. Jer. ii. 18. And Iſa. xxxi. *Wo to them that go down to Egypt.* Pſal. cvi. *They mingled themſelves,* &c. The Lord inſtructed Iſaiah, and in him all his own people, all the children whom God had given him, ſaying, *Say not ye, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people ſhall ſay, A confederacy,* Iſa. viii. 12. When all the people were going on in ſuch a mean of ſelf-defence, the Lord inſtructed him

him and the disciples among whom the testimony was sealed, that they should not walk in the way of this people. When Jehoshaphat was reproved for helping the ungodly, was not all his people reproved that went with him? They were the helpers of the ungodly as well as he. If Amaziah had refused to dismiss the army of Israel whom God was not with, doubtless it had been the subject's duty to testify against it, and refuse to concur and act in such a fellowship.

3. If the association and conjunction with malignants be only the sin of the parliament, and not the sin of the people, who do upon their command associate with them; then we cannot see how people can be guilty of association with malignants at any time, and in any case. To join with them in an ill cause is not lawful indeed: but neither may we join with good men in an evil cause. Suppose then the cause be good and necessary (as no war is just if it be not necessary) in what case or circumstances shall association with them be unlawful for the people? If it be said, in case the magistrate command it not, we think that strange divinity, that the sole command of the magistrate should make that our duty, which in absence of his command is our sin; and that not because of the absence of his command but from other perpetual grounds. Certainly, whenever association with them is a sin, it is not that which makes it a sin because the magistrate commands it not, but because God forbids it. And it is as strange, that the unlawful and sinful resolution of parliament should make that lawful to me which otherwise had not been lawful. It is known that human laws oblige not, but as they have connexion with God's word. Now if that law, enjoining a confluence of all subjects for the defence of the kingdom, be contrary to the word, in as far as it holds out a conjunction with malignant and bloody men, how can it be lawful to me, in obedience to that ordinance, to associate with these men? If it be said to be lawful in the case of necessity, that same necessity is as strong a plea for the magistrates employing them, as for the peoples joining with them: and if it do not justify that, it cannot excuse this. If the lawfulness of the mean must be measured by the justice and necessity of the end; then certainly any mean shall be lawful in the case of just and necessary defence; then we may employ Irish cut-throats; then we may go to the devil for help, if expediency to compass such a necessary and just end be the rule of the lawfulness of the mean.

4. The

4. The whole land is bound by the covenant and ſolemn engagement not to aſſociate with the malignant party: *Ergo*, It is as ſinful for the people to join with them as for the magiſtrate to employ them. Are we not all bound by covenant, to endeavour to bring malignants to condign puniſhment, and to look on them as enemies? And is not conjunction and confederacy with them, on the peoples part, as inconſiſtent in its own nature with that duty, as the magiſtrate's employing them is inconſiſtent with his covenanted duty? When all the people did ſolemnly engage themſelves not to join any more with the people of theſe abominations, was the meaning of it, We ſhall not join until our rulers join firſt; or, We ſhall not join with them in an ill cauſe? No indeed; but we ſhall not employ them in a good cauſe, or join with any party of them in it. If that engagement be upon every one in their ſtation, let us conſider what every man's ſtation in the work is. The ruler's ſtation and calling is to chooſe inſtruments, and levy forces for the defence thereof. The ſubject's ſtation and calling is, to concur in that work, by riſing in defence of the cauſe and kingdom. Now, what did the ſubject then engage unto? Certainly, unleſs we mock God, we muſt ſay, that as the magiſtrate engaged not to employ that ungodly generation in a good cauſe, ſo the ſubject engaged not to join with any ſuch party even in a good cauſe. If this be not the meaning of our engagements and vows, we ſee not how the ſubjects are in capacity to break them, as to that preciſe point of aſſociation.

In ſum, All the reaſons that are brought to prove the unlawfulneſs of the public reſolutions, may with a little variation be proportionably applied to this preſent queſtion. Therefore we add no more but a word to an objection or two.

Object. 1. A neceſſary duty, ſuch as ſelf-preſervation is, cannot be my ſin. But it is the ſubject's neceſſary duty to riſe in defence of the kingdom. *Ergo*, *Anſw.* A neceſſary duty cannot be a ſin in itſelf, but it may be a ſin in regard of ſome circumſtances, in which it ceaſes to be a neceſſary duty. It is a neceſſary duty to defend the kingdom: but it is neither a duty nor neceſſary to do it ſuch a conjunction and fellowſhip, but rather a ſin. If I cannot preſerve myſelf, but by an unlawful mean, then ſelf-preſervation in ſuch circumſtances, is not my duty.

Object. 2. Jonathan did aſſiſt Saul in a war againſt the Philiſtines invading the land, and no doubt many godly joined and

and died in battle. Now this is commended in ſcripture, as may be ſeen in David's funeral upon them; although it was known that Saul was an hater of God's people and a perſecutor, and that God had a controverſy with him, and that theſe 3000 that aſſiſted him againſt David were alſo ungodly and wicked men. *Anſw.* 1. Theſe ſcriptures ſpeak nothing to commend that particular act of Jonathan's conjunction in war with his father. David in his epitaph ſpeaks much to the commendation of both Saul and Jonathan, as of excellent warriors; and of Jonathan as a kind and conſtant friend to him: but there is nothing touched of that point. If that place be preſſed, it will follow with much more evidence, that Saul was as good a man as Jonathan, and that the people of God had great loſs in his death. But none of theſe muſt be preſſed rigorouſly from a ſpeech wherein he vents his affection and grief. 2. Suppoſe the natural bond of Jonathan to Saul his father, and the civil bonds of the people to Saul their king, did oblige them to join with him againſt the common enemy; yet we think they ought not to have aſſociated with theſe perſecuting ſervants, and the 3000 that purſued David; but they ought to have pleaded for a purging of the army. 3. It is not probable that there were many godly perſons employed in that army. David complains of that time, Pſal. xii. *That the godly man ceaſed, and the faithful from among the children of men: and that the wicked walked round about when the vileſt men were exalted.* 4. Many of the laws of God have not been much taken notice of, even by godly men, until the Lord hath taken occaſion to reprove them particularly, and ſo to mind them of their duty. It is like the rule, Deut. xxiii. hath not been conſidered till the time of Jehoſhaphat and Amaziah, *&c.*

Sect. 5. *Scriptures ſhewing the ſin and danger of joining with wicked and ungodly men.*

WHEN the Lord is puniſhing ſuch a people againſt whom he hath a controverſy, and a notable controverſy, *every one that is found ſhall be thruſt through: and every one joined with them ſhall fall,* Iſa. xiii. 15. They partake in their judgment, not only becauſe in a common calamity all ſhares, as in Ezek. xxi. 3. but chiefly becauſe joined with and partakers with theſe whom God is purſuing. Even as the ſtrangers that join to the houſe of Jacob partake of her

her bleſſings, chap. xiv. 1. To this purpoſe is Iſa. xxxi. 2, 3. and Ezek. xxx. 5, 6, 8. The mingled people and theſe that are in league with Egypt partake in her plagues, and theſe that uphold that throne that God ſo viſibly controverts with, *their power ſhall come down, and all its helpers ſhall be deſtroyed*, as it is Jer. xxi. 12, 29, 24. And this is the great reaſon of theſe many warnings to go out of Babylon, Jer. l. 8. and li. 6. Remember that paſſage, 2 Kings i. 9, 10, 11, 12. the captain and meſſenger of the king ſpeaks but a word in obedience to his wicked maſter's command, and the fifty are but with him and ſpeak not: but their maſter's judgment comes on them all.

Conſider how many teſtimonies the wiſe king, in his Proverbs, gives againſt it. Chap. i. from *ver.* 10, to 19. *My ſon, if ſinners entice thee, conſent thou not. If they ſay, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cauſe. Let us ſwallow them up alive as the grave, and whole as thoſe that go down into the pit. We ſhall find all precious ſubſtance, we ſhall fill our houſes with ſpoil. Caſt in thy lot among us, let us have one purſe. My ſon, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path. For their feet run to evil, and make haſt to ſhed blood*, &c. Here are the practices and deſigns of wicked men expreſſed in their own nature: but certainly they would colour them over with fair pretences; their purpoſe is to undo men, eſpecially godly men that claſſed and purged them. Yea, it is the profeſſion of many, and they ſcarce lie privily, or have ſo much wiſdom as to conceal their deſigns till their fit opportunity: but before the power be confirmed in their hand, they breathe out cruelty againſt all the innocent in the land, and promiſe themſelves great gain by it, and are already dividing their eſtates among them, ſaying, we ſhall find *all precious ſubſtance*, ver. 13. But, my ſon, if thou fear God, though they entice thee with ſpecious arguments of *nature*, and *neceſſity*, and *country privileges*, yet conſent not. Venture not thy ſtock in one veſſel with them: caſt not in thy lot among them. *Walk not in the way with them: refrain thy foot from their path*: for they are not come to the height of iniquity, they are running on to it: And if thou join, thou wilt caſt thyſelf in a miſerable ſnare; for either thou muſt go on with them to their deſigned and profeſſed evils, or be expoſed to their cruelty.

Chap. ii. from *ver.* 10. to the end. *When wiſdom entereth into*

into thine heart, and knowledge is pleaſant to thy ſoul, diſcretion ſhall preſerve thee, underſtanding ſhall keep thee. To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that ſpeaketh froward things. Who leave the paths of uprightneſs, to walk in the ways of darkneſs, &c. If thou take the word of God for a lamp to thy feet, and it enter into thy ſoul, and be received in love and affection, it will certainly keep thee from the evil man's way, who have already left the righteous paths to walk in the ways of darkneſs, who rejoice in nothing ſo much as in the ſorrows and miſeries of the godly, and delight in one another's wickedneſs. And it will keep thee chaſte to thy huſband Chriſt Jeſus, and preſerve thee from committing fornications with Egypt as Aholah and Aholibah, and joining ſo nearly with the degenerated ſeed of Abraham, who are but as ſtrangers: for come near their houſe and paths, and they will lead thee to deſtruction with them, or make thee a more miſerable life. But theſe that go to them return not again quickly; they are like fallen ſtars, ſhall they ever be ſet in the firmament again? It is ſafeſt to walk with good and righteous men: for God's bleſſing and promiſe is on them. His curſe and threatening is on the wicked: therefore thou may fear wrath on that account, if thou join with them.

Chap. iv. ver. 14, to 20. *Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away. For they ſleep not except they have done miſchief: and their ſleep is taken away except they cauſe ſome to fall. For they eat the bread of wickedneſs, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkneſs: and they know not at what they ſtumble.* It was ſaid, chap. iii. 23. that the man *who keeps wiſdom and the fear of God in his heart, ſhould walk in the way and not ſtumble.* That ſafety hath eaſe in it here, their ſteps are not ſtraitened, as when a man walks in ſteep and hazardous places, which cannot choofe but it will be, if a man enter into the path of wicked men, he muſt either go along in their way with them, and then it is broad indeed; or, if he think to keep a good conſcience in it, he will be pinched and ſtraitened: therefore it is moſt free for the mind and conſcience to avoid and paſs by that way: *for they ſleep not*, &c. they will never be ſatisfied till they have done miſchief, they will live upon the ruins of the poor country.

And how wilt thou join in that? Or how can thou eſchew it if thou walk with them? If it were no more, 'tis a ſuſpected by-path, that thou never travelled into. O paſs by it; or, if thou be entered, turn out of it. If thou wilt enter upon the apprehenſion of ſome light and duty in it, know that it is but evening, ſun is ſetting, and thou wilt be benighted ere it be long: and thou ſhalt ſtumble then and not know whereupon, even on that thou ſees now and thinks to eſchew and paſs by. Then from *ver.* 25, to the end. *Keep thy heart with all diligence: for out of it are the iſſues of life,* &c. Except thou keep thy heart and whole man, thou cannot eſcape falling into ſome temptation: O keep thy heart diligently on the knowledge and love of the truth. Take heed to thy words. Look not a-ſquint but directly to that which is good. Give not a ſquint look to any unlawful courſe, for the neceſſity or utility it may be ſeems to attend it. But look ſtraight on, and ponder well thy way thou walks in, that thou run to no extremity either to one party or other; That thou walk in the middle way between profanity and error, thou held theſe ways hitherto for extremes. Ponder, I beſeech thee then, before thou walk in any of them; ſee whether they be really come to thee, or thou to them. Mark who is changed.

Chap. v. 8, to the 15. *Remove thy way far from her: and come not near the door of her houſe. Leſt thou give thine honour unto others, and thy years unto the cruel. Leſt ſtrangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labours be in the houſe of a ſtranger. And thou mourn at laſt, when thy fleſh and thy body are conſumed; and ſay, How have I hated inſtruction, and my heart deſpiſed reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that inſtructed me,* &c. If thou would be ſafe from ſnares, remove from the way and houſe of the ſtrange woman. Thou muſt fall in Aholah and Aholibah's whoredoms, Ezek. xxiii. except thou come not near them. If thou keep not from that aſſembly and congregation, thou ſhall be *almoſt in all evil.* If thou join with them, thou cannot but partake of their ſins and plagues; and ſo thou ſhalt ſay after, when thou cannot well mend it, *I was near gone, my ſteps almoſt gone,* and all the aſſembly of his people ſhall witneſs to it.

Chap. vi. 16, 17, 18, 24, 25. *Theſe ſix things doth the Lord hate, yea ſeven are an abomination unto him. A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that ſhed innocent blood. An heart*

that

that deviſeth wicked imaginations, feet that be ſwift in running to miſchief. To keep thee from the ſtrange woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a ſtrange woman. Luſt not after her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee with her eye-lids. Deſcribes both our enemies, the malignant party and the ſectarian. Pride, violence, cruelty, lying, is the very character of the one. Flattery, beauty of pretended religion, falſe witneſſing and charging of the Lord's people, and ſeeking to ſow diſcord among theſe that were one in heart and work, is the character of the other. Now, keep thee from both theſe abominations: and do not think, it is in thy power not to be infected with the contagion of their fellowſhip. *Can a man take fire in his boſom and his clothes not be burnt? Can one go on hot coals and not burn his feet?* So whoever aſſociates and goes in friendly to either of them *ſhall not be innocent*, ver. 27, 28, 29.

Chap. vii. 14, *&c. I have peace-offerings with me, this day have I paid my vows.* They pretend religion on both ſides. And our church ſays, The malignants have ſatisfied them, and repented, even like the peace-offerings and vows of the whore. She began with her devotion, that ſhe might with more liberty ſin more, and have that pretence to cover it; and by means of her offerings, ſhe got a feaſt of the fleſh. Even as they by profeſſion of repentance are admitted to truſt; and by offering for the like ſin, a new ſin is covered, and vows undertaken never to be kept. Therefore take heed of theſe ſnares: *For ſhe hath caſt down many ſtrong*, ver. 26. Many a tall cedar hath fallen by that fellowſhip. It is the way to hell, *ver.* 27. See chap. viii. 13.

Chap. x. Shews us the very different eſtate of the godly and wicked, both in regard of light and knowledge concerning duty, and of bleſſings promiſed. Ver. 6, 9, 11, 20, 23. *Bleſſings are upon the head of the juſt: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked. He that walketh uprightly, walketh ſurely: but he that perverteth his ways, ſhall be known. The mouth of a righteous man is a well of life: but violence covereth the mouth of the wicked. The tongue of the juſt is as choice ſilver: the heart of the wicked is little worth. It is as a ſport to a fool to do miſchief: but a man of underſtanding hath wiſdom*, &c. ver. 24, 25, 28, 31, 32. Which ſhews us, that if the Lord's mind be revealed to any concerning the preſent courſes, it muſt be to his poor people that wait on him, and not to all the wicked and ungodly in the land, who almoſt

only are ſatisfied and clear in the courſe, who yet before were never ſatisfied. And beſide, though the Lord be chaſtiſing his people, yet one may join with them without fear of wrath and indignation on that account, and with hope of partaking of their bleſſings, when he cannot and dare not join with a wicked party purſued with wrath and indignation in the ſame diſpenſation. Which may be more clear from chap. xi. 3, 5, 8 *The integrity of the upright ſhall guide them: but the perverſeneſs of tranſgreſſors ſhall deſtroy them. The righteouſneſs of the perfect ſhall direct his way: but the wicked ſhall fall by his own wickedneſs. The righteous is delivered out of trouble and the wicked cometh in his ſtead.* And *ver.* 10, 11. ſhews the different condition of people under wicked rulers and godly. All the wicked now rejoice; none ſhouts but them, they think their day is come: the godly generally hang their head and are diſcountenanced. Even as Pſal. xii. The 21, and 31 *ver.* ſhews that when godly men are chaſtiſed and puniſhed in the earth for their ſins, much more wicked, eſpecially when the godly were chaſtiſed for partaking with them, according to 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. Iſa. x. 12. and xlix. 12.

Chap. xii. 13. *They are ſnared by the tranſgreſſion of their lips;* their ordinary common ſpeeches they drop out with, declare them and make their cauſe more hateful than other pretences it is covered with would permit. Yea, they ſpeak like the piercings of a ſword againſt the godly, *ver.* 11. If our ſtate and church had a lip of truth, they would ſpeak always the ſame thing, they would not carry in their talk and writings, as now every common underſtanding perceives. We may find their writings made up of contradictions: *For a lying tongue is but for a moment*, ver. 19. It is but for a moment indeed before the judicatory, and then out of doors it contradicts itſelf, as in the mock repentances. But ſorrow and anguiſh will come to theſe, who before they would ſpeak of terms of peace with one enemy, would aſſociate in war with another. *But to the counſellors of peace is joy*, ver. 20. The preſent courſe contradicts this. Ver. 26. *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: but the way of the wicked ſeduceth him.* They think theſe malignants better than the weſt country forces; they would condeſcend to any terms to get their help, though it were to ranverſe the Act of Claſſes, to give them indemnity; yea, not ſo much as to condemn their way: but they will not ſo much as clear the ſtate of the quarrel, or chooſe a better general for all their help.

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Their way ſeems good in their own eyes, ver. 15. But it were wiſdom to hearken to the counſel of the godly.

Chap. xiii. 10. *Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well adviſed is wiſdom.* There is nothing keepeth up our contention and wars but pride: no party will condeſcend to another. We will not ſay we have done wrong in bringing in the king; they will not ſay they have done wrong in invading: But it were wiſdom to fall lower and quit thoſe intereſts. Ver. 16. *Every prudent man dealeth with knowledge; but a fool layeth open his folly.* A wiſe man would count before the war, if he can accompliſh it: and if he cannot, then he would ſend meſſengers of peace, and cede in all things he may without ſin. If it be but more honour and wealth to our king, ſhould we deſtroy the kingdom to purchaſe that? Our raſh and abrupt proceedings ſhews our folly. Ver. 20. *He that walketh with wiſe men ſhall be wiſe: But a companion of fools ſhall be deſtroyed.* A man will be, muſt be aſſimilated to his company, and then partake of their judgment or bleſſings.

Chap. xiv. He that is accuſtomed to ſpeak truth in private, will in his common ſpeech be a faithful witneſs in public: but a man accuſtomed to lying, diſſembling, ſwearing in private, will not ſtick to forſwear himſelf, to make profeſſions and vows contrary to his mind in public, *ver.* 5. (which is alſo chap. xii. 17. and vi. 19.) Such men ſeek wiſdom and make a ſhew of religion, but find it not; whereas it is eaſy to godly men to find it, to find repentance and ſalvation, *v.* 6. Go away from fooliſh men and break off ſociety with ungodly men; be not privy to their counſels; uſe them not as ſpecial friends, when thou perceives that all means are uſed in vain to reclaim them from their damnable way and principles, *ver.* 7. The knowledge a godly man hath, it ſerves to direct his way, and is given of God for it: But all the wit and ſkill of ſuch wicked men is deceit; they themſelves are beguiled by it in opinion and practice, and hope. And they alſo beguile others, *ver.* 8. Sin makes fools agree: But among the righteous, that which is good makes agreement (in the old tranſlation) *ver.* 9. It is only evil will unite all the wicked in the land as one man: for 'tis *a ſport to them to do miſchief*, chap. x. 23. Albeit our way *ſeem right in our eyes*, yet becauſe it is a backſliding way, and departing from unqueſtionably right rules, *the end will be death*, and we will *be filled with our own devices.* O it ſhall be bitter in the belly

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of all godly men when they have eaten it, *ver.* 12, 14. and chap. i. 31. *The ſimple believeth every word*; giveth credit to every vain word that is ſpoken: But a prudent man looketh well to mens goings; ponders and examines whether their profeſſions and practices agree; what weight is in their words, by the inſpection of their deeds, and of their ordinary ſpeaking; and does not account a coined word before a judicatory ſufficient to teſtify repentance: and as he gives not preſent credit to their profeſſions, who have ſo often proven treacherous; ſo he himſelf ſcars at every appearance of evil, and keeps himſelf from it; whereas fooliſh ſouls rage and are confident; think any thing lawful if they can have any pretence for it, or uſe of it, *ver.* 15, 16. Then, what a great difference is between wicked and godly men, both in their lot, when God is correcting both? And in their diſpoſition, wiſdom that reſts in the one's heart, is manifeſted; wickedneſs in the other's heart appears alſo. In the midſt of ſuch men there is no other thing, *ver.* 32, 33.

Chap. xv. 8. *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight*, expreſſes how provoking a thing the outward profeſſions and ſacrifices of wicked men, continuing in their wickedneſs, what an abomination that commonly called public repentance, or eccleſiaſtical holineſs is, when men are viſibly unholy and ungodly in their converſation: And therefore he pleaded always with that people, that his ſoul abhorred their external ceremonies, *becauſe of the uncleanneſs of their hands*. He pleaded that he never commanded them, though indeed he did command them; yet thoſe were aberrations and departings from the expreſs rule and command, to accept or be pleaſed with theſe ſacrifices and ceremonies, when there was no evidence of real repentance. To this purpoſe are chap. xxi. 4, 27. Iſa. i. 11. and lxvi. 3. Jer. vi. 20. and vii. 22. Amos v. 22. All which ſhew that it is but a mocking of the Lord, and perverting of his law, and profaning of his ordinances, to accept the profeſſion of repentance in thoſe who walk contrary thereto, and to count them eccleſiaſtically holy enough, who ſay, they repent; though a thouſand actions witneſs the contrary. Of ſuch the Lord ſays, *What haſt thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth, ſeeing thou hates to be reformed?* Pſal. l. 16, 17. They have no right to it, they ſhould not be admitted to it: for it is a taking the Lord's name in vain. The 16 verſe tells us, that it had been better to poſſeſs our own land in quietneſs,

neſs, than to venture what we have for the uncertain conqueſt of England, and reſtitution of the king, parallel with Eccl. iv. 8.

Chap. xvi. 7. *When a man's ways pleaſe the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.* Can our ſtates way then pleaſe the Lord, ſeeing they cannot find the way of peace? They will not walk in it; and ſeeing they make the godly in the land to fall out with them, and none to be at peace but the wicked, who may thereby get opportunity to cruſh the godly. Ver. 17. *The highway of the upright is to depart from evil.* This is the highway only to depart from evil, not carnal policies, nor advantages. He thinks the ſtepping aſide to any of theſe is not the highway. Can then men change their way, and go croſs to it, and keep the right way in both? No, the godly have this way and keep it. Chap. xvii. 11. *An evil man ſeeketh only rebellion; therefore a cruel meſſenger ſhall be ſent againſt him.* Evil men ſeek only rebellion, and delights in no other thing: But the King of kings ſhall ſend a cruel meſſenger; he arms men with wrath and power againſt them. Ver. 13 ſpeaketh ſadly to the Engliſh and to our ſtate, that rewarded the weſt country evil for good. Ver. 14, 19. tells us how we ſhould adviſe before we begin a war, and leave no mean of compoſing difference and ſtrife uneſſayed. We did more in it than the Engliſh, but not all we might have done. Ver. 15. with chap. xviii. 5. is a dreadful ſentence againſt the public judicatories, that all their reſolutions, papers, and practices, juſtify the wicked and ungodly as honeſt faithful men, and condemn all approven faithful men, that cannot go along in ſuch courſes, or were earneſt to have them repent, as both malignants and ſectaries. Do they not pronounce all malignants friends, and abſolve them from the ſentences and claſſes they ſtand under? And do they not put the godly in their place? They relax the puniſhment of the one, and imputes tranſgreſſion to the other; and ſo brings them under a law. See Exod. xxiii 7. Prov. xxiv. 24. Iſa v. 23. and the 26 verſe of this chapter. It is not good to puniſh godly men, who have given conſtant proof of their integrity, for abſtaining from ſuch a courſe, at leaſt having ſo much appearance of evil, that many diſtinctions will never make the multitude to believe that we are walking according to former principles, becauſe their ſenſe obſerves the quite contrary practices, &c.

Chap. xviii. 2. *A fool hath no delight in underſtanding, but that*

that his heart may discover itself. Shews, that if the present cause and course were of God, and tended so much to his glory, fools or wicked men would have no such delight in it: for they delight in nothing but what is agreeable to their humour, to discover themselves, *&c.* Ver. 3. gives the true reason, why our public judicatories and armies are so base and contemptible; why contempt and shame is poured on them; because, *when the wicked comes, then also comes contempt, and with the vile man, reproach.* ver. 13. *He that answereth a cause before he hear it, it is folly and shame unto him.* Many pass peremptory sentence upon the honest party in the west, before they hear all parties, and be thoroughly informed, and this is a folly and shame to them. They hear the state and church and what they can say for their way; and indeed they seem just, because they are first in with their cause, and they will not hear another; but he that comes after will make inquiry, and discover those fallacies. Ver. 24. *There is a friend that sticketh closer that a brother.* A godly neighbour, not so near in natural bonds to us, that is a surer friend than many brethren in the flesh. These bonds of country and kindred, should all cede to God's interest. See chap. xvii. 17.

Chap. xix. 22. *A man's desire is his kindness: and a poor man is better than a liar.* The godly, that cannot concur in the public cause being disabled through an invincible impediment of sin lying in the way and means made use of, are better friends, and have more real good will to the establishment and peace of the land, than any ungodly man, let him be never so forward in the present course. Ver. 10. Pleasure and its attendants are not comely for a *wicked man*, i. e. fooliish man; much less for a *servant*, i. e. men enthralled in their lusts, to rule over *princes*, i. e. godly men, highly privileged by God. All things that are good do ill become them; but worst of all to have power and superiority over good men, ver. 25. joined with chap xxi. 11. Ring-leaders of wickedness, refractory and incorrigible persons should have been made examples to others, and this would have prevented much mischief. The scripture gives ground for putting difference between the scorner and simple, seducers and seduced.

Chap. xx. 6. xxi. 2. and xvi. 2. *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness; but a faithful man who can find?* It is no great wonder that malignants say they repent; and

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the ſtate and church ſay they keep the ſame principles: for who will ſay any evil of himſelf? Ver. 8. Magiſtrates ſhould ſcatter away evil men with their countenance, and denying it to them, and looking down on them: How then do our rulers gather them? Ver. 3. ſhews that war and ſtrife ſhould not be kept up but in extreme neceſſity: *fools will be meddling.* Ver. 11. ſhews that the beſt way of judging of men is by their doings and fruits, not ſtrained words and confeſſions. But theſe who, upon a bare profeſſion, pronounce a notour malignant a friend, having no proof of their integrity, and will not have any judged ſuch, but ſuch as judicially are debarred; yet they, contrary to all the teſtimony of works and fruits, judge and condemn honeſt men as traitors, though not judicially convicted. Certainly *divers meaſures are an abomination to the Lord*, as in ver. 10. Then ver. 25. ſacrilege is deſcribed, and covered perjury, which is a ſnare to the ſoul that commits it; *to devour that which is holy*, i. e. Employeth to common uſe theſe things God hath ſet apart, and commanded to be kept holy, as our profaning of repentance and abſolution by caſting ſuch pearls to ſwine, and for our own advantage making a cloke of them to bring in wicked men, contrary to the very nature and inſtitution of the ordinance. Alſo our proſtituting of our covenant and cauſe, moſt holy things, to maintain unholy or common intereſts. Our committing his holy things to them that will devour them. *And after vows to make inquiry*, to diſpute now, that we did not bind ourſelves in the caſe of neceſſity, not to employ wicked men; when as the ground is perpetual and holds in all caſes. It ſhews either temerity in ſwearing, or impiety in enquiring afterward and changing. See Deut. xxiii. 21. Then ver. 26. *A wiſe king ſcattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them.* O that our magiſtrates were ſo wiſe! Is the act of levy a ſcattering of the wicked? Is the act of indemnity a bringing the wheel over them? Pſal. ci. 8. *I will early deſtroy*, &c.

In chap. xxi. 10. *The ſoul of the wicked deſireth evil, his neighbour findeth no favour in his eyes.* The wicked's principles carry no where but to evil, and to do evil to good men, ver. 8. His way and life is full of horrible and tragical chances: But a good man's work is eaſy and pleaſant; directs to a good and peaceable end, Iſa. xxvi. 7. In ver. 12. A righteous man ſhould have his wit about him, to conſider ungodly houſes and families, and perſons that God hath viſible controverſies with, that he may not communicate with them

in their judgments, ver. 16. It is a ſad wandering out of the way, when a man leaves the congregation of the living to abide among the dead. Dead in ſins and appointed to death. It is a great judgment as well as ſin. Ver. 27, with the 4. and places before cited, ſhew how abominable the external profeſſions and pretences of wicked men are, when contradicted by their practice; eſpecially if they do it but out of a wicked mind, when they intend to effect ſome miſchief, under the colour of repentance and being reconciled to the church. As Abſalom's vow at Hebron; as Balaam and Balak, and the Phariſees, who under pretence of long prayers devoured widows houſes; as Jezebel's faſt; and as the people, Iſa. lviii. 4. who faſted for ſtrife and debate, and to ſtrike with the fiſt of wickedneſs. All men know that the church is the ladder to ſtep up upon to go to preferment, and repentance the door to enter to places of truſt.

Chap. xxii. 3. *A prudent man foreſeeth the evil and hideth himſelf, but the ſimple paſs on and are puniſhed.* He is a wiſe man that knows the judgment of the Lord, as the ſtork and ſwallow the time of their coming, that in the conſideration of ſins and threatenings, and comparing things ſpiritual with ſpiritual, apprehendeth judgment coming on ſuch a courſe and ſuch a party, and hides himſelf, goes aſide, retires to a covert, by avoiding theſe evils, and the leaſt fellowſhip with them that bring it on, and eſchewing ſuch a ſociety as hath the cloud hanging directly above their head: but ſimple idiots and blind worldlings go on head-long, and dread nothing, and are puniſhed, ver. 5. Moſt grievous plagues and puniſhments, and all manner of unhappineſs encumbereth their wicked life: Therefore he that would keep himſelf pure and clean, 1 John v. 18. and ſave his own ſoul, ſhall be far from them; ſhall keep himſelf far from ſuch people. He prays with Job, *Let their counſel be far from me.* Job xxi. 16, 17. Becauſe *their good is not in their hand, their candle is oft put out*, &c. And reſolves with Jacob, *My ſoul ſhall not enter into their ſecret*, to have ſuch intimacy with them, as join counſels with them, Gen. xlix. 6. And ver. 10, 11. Caſt out of thy company, family, juriſdiction, the ſcorner that contemns the godly men, and mocks inſtruction: for ſuch men are infectious, and able to corrupt all they converſe with: But caſt him out, and contention ſhall go out with him. It is ſuch only that mars the union of the godly, that ſtirs up ſtrife, and foments diviſions. Thou ſhalt have more peace

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and be more free from ſin and ſhame. But, ſound-hearted upright men, who deal faithfully, not to pleaſe but to profit, you ſhould chooſe theſe to entruſt and rely upon; theſe ſhould be the friends of kings. Ver. 14 As a harlot's allurements are like pits to catch men, ſo the allurements of wicked ungodly men, their power, policy, *&c.* and their fair ſpeeches and flatteries, are a deep ditch to catch men into this ſpiritual whoredom and fornication ſpoken of Ezek. xxiii. And he whom God is provoked with, by former wickedneſs, falls into it, Eccl. vii. 26. Ver. 24, 25. *Make not friendſhip with an angry man: and with a furious man thou ſhall not go,* &c. And is not aſſociation in arms with ſuch, as friends againſt an enemy, a making friendſhip with them we are ſworn to hold as enemies? If we may not converſe with a furious paſſionate man, how then with men of blood, enraged, whoſe inveterate malice hath now occaſion to vent againſt all the godly? For thou wilt learn his ways, as we have always ſeen it by experience, and thou wilt get a ſnare to thy ſoul: If thou go not in his ways you cannot agree, you will fall out and quarrel, and that is a ſnare to thee. Ver. 28. *Remove not the ancient land-mark which thy fathers have ſet.* If it be ſo dreadful and accurſed to remove our neighbour's marks and bounds, O how much more to change and alter God's land-mark; his privileges, oaths and covenants, *&c.* and chap xxiii. 10, 11. Deut. xix. 14. and xxvii. 17.

Chap. xxiii. 1, 7. *When thou ſitteſt to eat with a ruler, conſider diligently what is before thee. For as he thinketh in his heart ſo is he,* &c. Conſider diligently what men are, not what they pretend and ſeem to be: for as they think ſo are they, not as they pretend with their tongue and countenance, but as they think in their heart, which is better evidenced by their common and habitual ſpeaking and walking, than any deliberate and reſolved profeſſion contrived of purpoſe. But if thou conſider not this, the morſel thou haſt eaten thou ſhalt vomit up; thou ſhalt dearly pay for thy credulity, and loſe all thy ſweet words. Ver. 23. *Buy the truth and ſell it not,* &c. Do not we ſell the truth and cauſe and all into the hands of the enemies of all? Whereas we ought to ranſom the kingdom's liberty and religious intereſt, with the loſs of all extrinſic intereſt that does but concern the acceſſion of one's honour; yet we ſell, endanger, and venture all for that.

Chap. xxiv. 1. *Be not thou envious againſt evil men, neither deſire thou to be with them.* Godly mens hearts are often

tickled to be acquainted with, in league and friendſhip with wicked men, when they have power, that they may not be hurt by them; but ſeeing there is no ſociety between light and darkneſs, let not the godly deſire to be with them, as in chap. xxiii. 17. But rather to be in God's fear always, that is good company. The reaſon is ver. 2. Their heart ſtudies the deſtruction of the godly, why then ſhould thou walk with thine enemy? And you ſhall hear nothing but miſchief in their lips. ver. 12. It is not according to mens words but works they ſhould be judged, and why do not we follow that rule in judging? Do we mock God as one mocks another? Job xxxiv. 11. Pſal. lxii. 12. Jer. xxxii. 19. Rom. ii. 6. Ver. 21, *&c.* Men given to change, falſe deceitful men, meddle not with ſuch if thou either fear God or reſpect man; for ſuch will be ſure to no intereſt but their own. Their calamity ſhall come ſuddenly; therefore have nothing to do with them: for who knows the ruin of them, both of them and all other wicked men, or of both them and the king, if wicked? Alſo to the wiſe and godly this belongs. It is not good to have reſpect of perſons in judgment, whether he be king or nobleman. A righteous ſtate *reſpects not the perſon of the prince and mighty*, ſaith Job. But he that ſays to the righteous, You are wicked ſectaries, and alſo malignants, becauſe ye will not approve all their reſolutions; and to the wicked, You are righteous; to the malignants, You are the honeſt men; the bleſſed of the Lord, who did ever to this day fall under Meroz curſe: Should the people approve him? No, certainly; him ſhall they curſe, and the nations abhor him, or them: But a bleſſing on them that would reprove our ſins and ſearch them out. ver. 29. The malignant party are even ſpeaking ſo: as the claſſers and purgers did to us, even ſo will we do to them. But God will render them according to their work.

Chap. xxv. 2. *It is the honour of kings to ſearch out a matter.* It is a king and judge's glory to ſearch out a matter, to try diſſemblers before they truſt them; God's glory is to pardon, man's glory is to adminiſter juſtice impartially. Ver. 4, 5. ſhews what need there is of purging places of truſt, eſpecially about the king. Droſs cannot be melted, take what pains you will, it will not convert into a veſſel and become uſeful. This mixed in, obſtructs all equity, juſtice and piety where it is. The ruler ſhould be the refiner to purge away this droſs, and the army, or judicatory, or kingdom, is a veſſel.

veſſel. You ſhall never get a fined veſſel for uſe and ſervice, till you purge away the droſs, Pſal. ci. 4. Then, ver. 8. we ſhould follow peace with all men as much as is poſſible, never to begin ſtrife or draw the ſluice of contention: But if we be wronged, we ſhould not for all that go out haſtily to ſtrife, till, 1. The juſtice and equity of the cauſe appear. 2. That the matter whereabout we contend be of great moment, a ground to found a war upon. 3. That we firſt uſe all means of peace and agreement poſſible. 4. That we overmatch not ourſelves with theſe who are too ſtrong for us. See chap. xvii. 14. Leſt thou be brought to that extremity that thou know not what to do. Thus Chriſt adviſeth, Luke xiv 31. I am perſuaded this would plead much in reaſon to yield ſecurity to England, ſo be our wrong were repaired and no more done. Ver. 19. ſhews what the employment of unfaithful men, who mean nothing leſs than they pretend, is, they fail when moſt is expected, and hurts beſide, as Job's friends, chap. vi. 15. And ver. 26 A righteous and upright man, conſenting with a wicked man in ſin; or, through fear of him, not daring to do his duty, turning to him and his way, or dallying and flattering him in his iniquity, *is like a troubled fountain*, is not good and profitable for edification nor correction, having troubled the purity of his ſoul through the mud of carnal reſpects and intereſts: Corruption within is the mire, the wicked's ſeducements are like the beaſt's trampling it with his foot; and he is like a corrupt, infected and poiſoned fountain, more ready to infect and draw others by his example. Ver. 27. A man ſhould not ſeek honour and preferment that is baſe and ſhameful. None of the trees longed for ſovereignty but the bramble.

Chap. xxvi. 1. *As ſnow in ſummer and as rain in harveſt; ſo honour is not ſeemly for a fool.* It is as unſeemly, prodigious and deſtructive a thing, to give honours, promotions and truſt to wicked men, as ſnow and much rain in harveſt; a reproach and puniſhment more becomes him, than honour the reward of goodneſs, (as ver. 3) a whip, rod and bridle for him, to reſtrain him from wrong and provoke him to goodneſs. ver. 6. He that commits an errand or buſineſs and entruſts a wicked man with it, is as unwiſe in ſo doing as if he did cut off the meſſenger's feet he ſent; he deprives himſelf of the means to compaſs it; he ſends a lame man to run an errand; he is puniſhed by himſelf as if he had cut off his own feet, and procureth ſorrow and diſcontent to himſelf, as if

he

he were compelled to drink nothing but what is contrary to his ſtomach. ver. 7. All good ſpeeches halt and limp in evil mens mouths; for there is no conſtancy in their mouths: Within they are very roſtenneſs. *Out of the ſame mouth comes curſing and bleſſing*, James iii. 10. Their very words agree not; the public and extraordinary croſſes, the private and ordinary, and their actions have leſs harmony with their words. *Profeſſing they know God, in works they deny him*, &c. ver. 8. To give a madman a weapon, what elſe is it but to murder? To bring ſhot to an ordinance which may do much miſchief to himſelf and others, is to be acceſſory to that miſchief; ſo to give honour to a fool, he hath given power to them, and put them in a capacity to do evil, and ſet them on work again to perfect their deſigns againſt good men. ver. 9. As a drunken man, put a thorn in his hand, he can make no uſe of it, but to hurt himſelf and others; ſo wicked mens good ſpeeches and fair profeſſions, commonly tend to ſome miſchief, theſe but cover their evil deſigns: and yet the covering is ſhorter than that it can hide them. ver 10. Wicked rulers [look the margin] grieve and moleſt the ſubjects; and the means to effect this is, to employ the fool and tranſgreſſor, to give offices and countenance to evil men, which may be inſtruments of their luſt; ſo Abimelech, Judges ix. 4. ſo Jezebel, 1 Kings xxi. 10. ſo in Neh. viii. 15. Ver. 11. The dog feeling his ſtomach ſurcharged, goes to the graſs, as our malignants to profeſs repentance, and caſts up that which troubles him by a feigned confeſſion; But becauſe there is no change in his nature; he is inwardly ſtirred by his old principles to lick up that vomit, to commit and practiſe what he profeſſed repentance for; yea, and to profeſs the ſame he pretended ſorrow for: When power is confirmed in their hand they will return to their folly. Ver. 17. What elſe is our interpoſing ourſelves in the king's quarrel concerning England, though we have intereſt in it to endeavour it in a peaceable way, if he were fit for it; yet in compariſon of our kingdom and religion's ſafety, which may be ruined by war, it is no ſuch matter as belongeth to us: And ſo it falls out, we are like a man taking a dog by the ears to hold him: we have raiſed up many enemies, and provoked them to bite us: We cannot hold them long from deſtroying him; and we provoke them more by holding them, in eſpouſing his quarrel, as Jehoſhaphat joining with Ahab. We had done well to interpoſe ourſelves between the king and them to make

peace,

peace, but to ſide to one party was not well done. Ver. 18, 19. Furious and bloody men take all opportunities to hurt others, eſpecially good men; and ſo deceiveth theſe employed: But they do it under a pretence, as a ſcorner reproacheth under a pretence of ſport; ſo they, under other pretences, of wrongs done, of the country's defence, *&c.* Ver. 20, 24. ſhews the way to prevent trouble and keep peace. As a contentious turbulent perſon would enflame a whole country and put them by the ears; ſo a perſon, though not contentious in his own nature, yet having many contentious intereſts following him, which he will not quit or commit to God's providence, as our king was. O it is the deſtruction of a nation to have ſuch a perſon among them: He hath broken the peace of two kingdoms. Ver. 23, 24, 25, 26. Burning lips, hot and great words of love and friendſhip, and a wicked heart, revenging its enmity, and minding nothing leſs than what is ſpoken, is like a potſherd, a droſſy piece covered over with the fairding of hypocriſy; or like a ſepulchre garniſhed and painted, he diſſembles and ſpeaks vanity, and flatters, Pſal. xii. 3. But he lays up his wicked purpoſes cloſe within him till a time of venting them: Therefore when he ſpeaks ſo fair and courteouſly, be not confident of him, truſt him not too far till thou haſt proof of his reality. Put not thyſelf and thy deareſt intereſts into his mercy. This is wiſdom and not want of charity, Jer. xii. 6. Micah vii. 5. Cain, Joab, and Judas are proofs of this. It may be covered a time, but not long. *Naturam expellas furca licet uſque recurrat.* All the world ſhall be witneſs of it, Pſal. cxxv. So then, ver. 21. the calumniator and falſe accuſer, who openly profeſſes his hatred and malice, and the flatterer that ſeems to be moved with love, both of them produce one effect, *viz.* Ruin and calamity.

Chap. xxvii. 3, 4. *A ſtone is heavy and the ſand weighty: but a fool's wrath is heavier than them both,* &c. We ſee what we may expect of the enraged, exaſperated malignant party, their wrath againſt all the godly, for their faithful ſecluding and purging them out of places of truſt, is weighty and inſupportable like the ſand of the ſea; it will cruſh them under it if God ſupport not. It is like a ſwelling river or a high ſpring-tide, it goes over all banks, ſince the ſtate and church have drawn the ſluice and let it out. But when it is joined with envy and malice, againſt godlineſs and piety itſelf, who can ſtand before that? No means can quench that heat.

heat. Ver. 6. Faithful mens reproofs, remonſtrances and warnings, applied in love and compaſſion, are better than an enemy's kiſſes and flatteries, than his oils and ointments are: Therefore we would pray againſt the one, and for the other; that God would ſmite us with the mouth of the righteous, but keep us from the dainties of the wicked Joabs, Judaſes, and Achitophels. Ver. 8. ſpeaks ſadly againſt miniſters that withdraw from their charges ſo unneceſſarily, as a bird that wandereth too long from her neſt, the young ſtarve for cold or famine, or are made a prey; ſo theſe, who having no neceſſary call to be elſewhere, eſpecially not being members of the commiſſion, yet ſtay not with their flocks, are guilty of their ſouls ruin. Ver. 10. O how doth this ſpeak againſt the preſent courſe of judicatories, they have forſaken their old faithful friends, when they proved ever conſtant, and have gone in to their wicked countrymens houſe in the day of their calamity. But a neighbour in affection and piety, is nearer than a brother in fleſh and near in habitation.

Chap. xxviii. 1. *The wicked flee when no man purſueth: but the righteous is bold as a lion.* Wicked men are now choſen for ſtoutneſs and courage, but they have no ſure foundation for it. 'Tis but like the rage and temerity of a madman or drunkard: But godly men, once ſatisfied in grounds of conſcience about their duty, would have been bold as lions. A good conſcience would have made them bold, Pſal. cxii. 7, 8. Lev. xxvi. 36. Now, ver. 2. behold the puniſhment of our ſins, our governors are changed; there is almoſt a total alteration, and we are faces about, which cannot but bring ruin to the land, eſpecially when men of underſtanding and piety are ſhut out. Ver. 4. with chap. xxix. 27. It is a great point and argument of declining and forſaking the law of God, when men praiſe the wicked, change their names though they themſelves be not changed, and leave off contending with or declaring againſt them, and do rather plead for them. But godly men, that keep the law, contend with, diſcountenance and oppoſe them; as David, I hate them that hate thee, and earneſtly contend with them: Thus they are kept from partaking with other mens ſins. Ver. 5. It is not very likely, that all the ungodly ſhould now underſtand the duty of the times and diſcern the right way, and that ſo many that fear God underſtand it not, ſeeing the Lord's ſecret is revealed to them, Pſal. xxv. 14. Ver. 6, 7. A poor man, and weak means, if they be of upright men, are better and ſtronger than

than many rich and ſtrong perverters. A companion of evil men and a keeper of the law agree not in one perſon; the one is an honour, the other a ſhame to all that have intereſt in them. Ver. 9. Their prayers and profeſſions are abomination; no acceptation of thoſe who turn away their ears from obedience to the law, who walk contrary to it. Ver. 10. Theſe cunning and crafty men that have enticed ſome godly men, and led them on in the preſent courſe, ſhall themſelves ſmart for it, when the godly ſeduced ſhall ſee good things after all this. Ver. 12. When wicked men have power and truſt, good men hide and retire themſelves from ſuch a congregation or aſſembly of the wicked. See chap. x. 10, 11. Should we thus chooſe our own plague, tyranny, oppreſſion, calamity, and miſery, and caſt away our own glory? Then, ver. 13. repentance requires true and ingenuous confeſſion, and real forſaking; if both theſe join not, it is but a covering and hiding of ſin. If a man confeſs, and yet walk and continue in them, he is but uſing his confeſſion as a covering to retain his ſins; and ſuch ſhall not find mercy of God, or proſper before men. Ver. 14. It is not ſo deſpiſable a thing to fear alway, and to be very jealous of ſin as it is now made. It is counted a reproach to have any ſcruples at the preſent courſe: But happy is he that abſtaineth from all appearance of evil; but he that emboldeneth himſelf, and will not queſtion any thing that makes for advantage, falls into miſchief. Ver. 15, 17. ſhews the lamentable condition of a people under wicked rulers, they are beaſts and not men towards the people, eſpecially towards the beſt, Dan. vii. 4, 5. Zeph. iii. 3. Ver. 17. How doth that agree with our ſparing of bloody men, of our ſoliciting for their impunity, of our pardoning them? Are they not, by the appointment of God's law, ordained for deſtruction, and haſte to it? Should any then ſtay them? ſhould they not then far leſs employ them? And, ver. 24. if it be ſo hainous to take our father's goods upon this pretence, becauſe they are our own, how much more ſacrilege is it to rob God of his intereſts, and give over his money to bankrupts, and ſay it is no tranſgreſſion to rob the land of its defence, and make them naked, as Ahaz his confederacy did? Certainly it is murder. Ver. 28. and chap. xxix. 2. and xi 12. and xxviii. 28. are to one purpoſe: We have forſaken our own mercy and wronged our own ſouls; and deſtroyed ourſelves in chooſing our own judgment, and making our own rod to beat us withal. Chap. xxix. 1. We being

ſo often reproved by his word and providence for the ſin of aſſociation with the wicked, and being ſo lately puniſhed for it; and having ſo lately reproved ourſelves for it in our declarations and faſts, yet to harden our necks, what can we expect but utter deſtruction, and that without remedy, as we ſentenced ourſelves? Ezra ix. 13. and xiv. 13. Iſa. xxx. 13, 14. Shall not this iniquity be to us a breach ready to fall, even this iniquity of going down to Egypt for help, *&c.* Then, ver. 6. there is a ſnare to entrap thy feet in the ſins of the wicked; if thou be joined with them thou cannot well eſcape. ver. 8. Wicked profane contemners of God and his people bring ruin on a city or commonalty, they ſet it on fire and blow it up: But godly men pacify wrath, turn away judgments, and purge all from provocations, which is the only means to turn it away. Ver. 16. ſhews, when wicked men gather together, and grow in ſtate and power, they grow worſe, and ſin with greater boldneſs, and tranſgreſſion then overflows the land *tanquam ruptis repagulis*. There is no obſtacle. See Pſal. xii. And ver. 24. ſhews, he that is partner and fellow-receiver with a thief, or conceals ſuch offenders, endangers his own deſtruction: and he that ſtays with and aſſociates with wicked men, muſt hear curſing and cannot bewray it; he will ſee many abominations, that though he would he cannot remedy. Ver. 25. Fear of man and of the land's danger, hath brought many into a ſnare, to run from the Lord to an arm of fleſh: but he that truſts in the Lord ſhall be ſafe. Ver. 27. Here is the deadly enmity between the two ſeeds, they cannot reconcile well. See ver. 10. and chap. xxi. 3. It is no wonder the godly abominate ſuch men who are God's enemies and the land's plague.

Chap xxx. 11, 14. deſcribes the malignant party, who make nothing of the godly magiſtrates or their mother church and land, but curſe, malign, oppoſe as much as they could, and are oppreſſors, monſtrous tyrants, mankind beaſts, or beaſtly men; the ſubject of their cruelty is the godly afflicted man; they eat up all and will not leave the bones. As the prophet complains, I lie among men whoſe teeth are as ſpears and arrows, and their tongue as a ſharp ſword. And then, ver. 12, 13, 20. deſcribes our enemies, the invaders. They think themſelves godly and righteous, yet are not purged from their filthineſs. They are given up to ſtrong deluſions to believe lies; and there is no lie greater than this, that they are a godly party in a godly cauſe and way. They wipe

wipe their mouth after all their bloodſhed, and ſay, *I have done no evil:* They waſh their hands, as Pilate, as if they were free of the blood of theſe juſt men, whoſe ſouls cry under the altar. Ver. 21, 22, 23. It is a burden to the world and a plague to mankind, when ſervants, unworthy men, and perſons unfit for high places are ſet in authority, and when wicked men have their deſire of plenty and honour, (chap. xix 10.) and when an odious woman, or men of hateful vicious diſpoſitions come to preferment and are eſpouſed by a ſtate. Nought they were while alone, but worſe now when they have crept into the bed and boſom of the ſtate. Her roots are nought before; but now ſhe is planted in rank mould, and will ſhoot forth her unſavoury branches and bloſſoms. And when handmaids, kept in a ſervile eſtate beeauſe of their diſpoſition and quality, get their maſters uſhered out, and they become heirs, at leaſt poſſeſſors of the inheritance or truſt. Ver. 33. ſhews how neceſſarily war and contention follow upon unneceſſary provocations by word or deed, ſuch as we have given many to England, though indeed they have given moe. And laſtly, chap. xxxi. 20, 26, 31. ſhews how word and work ſhould go together, and men ſhould be eſteemed and praiſed according to their works and fruit of their hands.

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A

SOLEMN TESTIMONY

Againſt TOLERATION, and the preſent proceedings of Sectaries and their Abettors, in ENGLAND, in reference to RELIGION and GOVERNMENT.

By the COMMISSIONERS of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the Kirk of SCOTLAND.

With the Anſwer, of Parliament, to the ſaid TESTIMONY.

ALSO A

TESTIMONY

TO THE

TRUTH of JESUS CHRIST;

OR,

To the Doctrine, Worſhip, Diſcipline and Government of the Kirk of SCOTLAND; and to the National Covenants,

Againſt the prevailing Errors, Hereſies, Blaſphemies, *&c. &c.*

By the MINISTERS of PERTH and FIFE.

KILMARNOCK:
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M.DCC.LXXXIII.

EDINBURGH 16. *Jan.* 1649. *Poſtmeridiem.*

A neceſſary and ſeaſonable Teſtimony againſt Toleration, and the preſent proceedings of Sectaries and their abettors in England, in reference to religion and government; with an admonition and exhortation unto their brethren there, from the Commiſſioners of the General Aſſembly of the kirk of Scotland.

ALBEIT the work of reformation in theſe kingdoms hath ingraven upon it ſo many, and ſo lively characters of the truth, and power, and wiſdom of Jeſus Chriſt, as gives unto us ſufficient grounds of hope that he will bring forth the head-ſtone of his houſe with ſhoutings, unto the ſhame of his adverſaries and refreſhing of his people; yet the ſenſe which we have of our duty, in regard of our ſtation and truſt, the danger that threatens religion and government, together with the deſire which we have to reſtore thoſe that are fallen, to ſtrengthen the weak, and to comfort the afflicted in England, calls upon us to give public teſtimony againſt the preſent proceedings of ſectaries and their abettors in that land, and to ſpeak a word of admonition and exhortation to our brethren there.

It hath been unto us, and we make no doubt unto the proteſtant churches abroad, matter of much ſorrow and grief of heart, that after ſo many ſufferings from, and wreſtling with the popiſh, prelatical and malignant party; and after that they are brought down by the mighty hand, and ſtretched-out arm of the Lord, there ſhould ariſe in their ſtead another to oppoſe his work in theſe kingdoms: And it adds unto our affliction that they be ſuch as profeſs for Jeſus Chriſt, and pretend unto holineſs, and ſeemed once to build with ourſelves, whilſt now their way is become grievous, and goes down unto the gates of death, as tending to overturn religion, deſtroy the league and covenant, and to raze the foundations of government.

It ſhall not now be needful to fall upon an enumeration of all theſe errors which have ſprung up in England of late: A few years paſt have brought forth more and more dangerous opinions in that one kingdom, than many preceding generations in all the churches of Chriſt, ſo evil and bitter a thing it is to leave every man to his own fancy, and the vineyard of

of the Lord without a hedge. The late general assemblies of the kirk of Scotland and their commissioners, have borne testimony against independency, erastianism, anabaptism, antinomianism, arminianism, socinianism, familism, scepticism, &c. And the ministers of the province of London, and many others have more particularly reckoned and condemned the errors which men of corrupt minds there have run into. We bless the Lord for every faithful witness and desire to put to our seal that his testimony is true; but of all things it most afflicts our spirits, and we cannot but look upon it with horror and amazement, that in a land covenanted with God, after Satan hath been so cunning as to sow the seed of so many heresies and errors, he should now prevail so far upon the spirits of men, as to make them instrumental to plead for a toleration unto all errors, and to endeavour that this monstrous iniquity may be established by a law, and that of so large extent, as carries no exception, but express popery and compulsion. The first whereof leaves latitude enough to take in any papists whatsoever, if he can but a little dissemble the grossness of his way, and the latter doth not obscurely point at those, who plead for the government of Jesus Christ by presbyteries, and hold that all men are to walk according to the rule of the word of God: Is this all the favour and approbation, that such may expect to be ranked amongst the worst of papists? There are many devices in the heart of man; but the counsel of the Lord shall stand; and he will give unto his people a nail in his holy place.

We have searched after the mind of Christ, and have traced the footsteps of the prophets and apostles, in the Old and New Testament: and no where can we find in the scriptures of truth, either precept or precedent allowed of God for toleration of any error, much less did it ever come into his mind, or did he speak to any of his servants concerning a toleration of all error. As that infinitely glorious divine Essence is one in himself most holy, most righteous, most true, so hath he given unto the children of men, one eternal, unchangeable law, according to the rule whereof they are to square their profession, and order their conversation: Therefore as his justice requires in the covenant of works that we should walk according thereto without declining to the right hand or the left, so he in his mercy promises in the covenant of grace to give unto his people one heart and one way to fear him for ever: And in both covenants they are obliged

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to walk after the rule of this law. It is acknowledged by many of thoſe with whom we have now to do, that no liberty is to be allowed unto men in the breaches of the duties of the ſecond table, which we owe unto our neighbours, but that if a man ſin againſt his neighbour, and diſturb the peace of the common-wealth, he is to be reſtrained and puniſhed: Can there any ſolid reaſon be given why it ſhould not alſo be thus in regard of the duties of the firſt table which we owe unto God? Is not one Lord author of both? hath not conſcience influence upon both? Is not the Lord's glory intereſted in the one as well as in the other? Doth not his image ſhine as brightly, and may it not be as much defaced in the one as in the other? Are the things of God leſs precious than the things of men, and that which concerns the ſoul leſs to be cared for than that which concerns the body? or are we more to value our own damage than the Lord's diſhonour? We know that no man hath dominion over the conſcience: But the Lord who made it, exerciſes his ſovereignty therein; and he hath ſet a law unto the ſpirits of men, after the rule whereof they are to order both their judgments and affections; and hath given power to thoſe whom he clothes with authority, which they are to exerciſe in theſe things ſo far as they are manifeſted in expreſſions and actions unto the diſhonour of his name, and hurt and prejudice of others: All thoſe who have their ſenſes in any meaſure exerciſed in the word of God will acknowledge that it is repugnant thereto, that any who are clothed with power œconomic, eccleſiaſtic or politic, ſhould connive at any error in any of theſe that are ſubject to their juriſdiction, or allow it liberty by a law. Abraham did command his children and his houſhold to keep the way of the Lord, and to do juſtice and judgment, Gen. xviii. 19. Jacob took order for purging of his houſhold and all that were with him, from all the idols and ſtrange gods that were amongſt them, Gen. xxxv. 2. David will have none of thoſe who tell lies, but ſuch as walk in a perfect way, to be in his houſe, Pſal. ci. And the apoſtle Paul will have all paſtors and deacons to rule their houſes well, and to keep them in ſubjection, 1 Tim. iii. Neither is there leſs required of thoſe who bear charge in the houſe of God. It was a ſpecial part of the office of Aaron and his ſons to ſeparate betwixt the precious and the vile: Jehoiada ſet porters at the gates of the houſe of the Lord, that none which was unclean in any thing ſhould enter therein, 2 Chron. xxiii. 19.

The apoſtle Paul would not give place unto thoſe by ſubjection who came in privily to ſpy out the kirk's liberty for the ſpace of an hour, Gal. ii. 5. and he will have an heretic after the firſt and ſecond admonition to be rejected, Tit. iii. 10. And are not ſome of the churches of Aſia commended for their diligence, and others of them reproved for their negligence herein, Rev. ii. 2, 6, 14, 15, 20. And though the power of the magiſtrate be herein moſt queſtioned by the patrons of toleration, yet is the ſcripture very clear and plentiful both in precepts and precedents, in promiſes, rewards, in threatenings and judgments, in encouragements and reproofs, that it is the office and duty of the magiſtrate not only to ſuppreſs and puniſh iniquity and unrighteouſneſs, but alſo ungodlineſs and error, and that he beareth his ſword in relation to both. As the Lord by his ſervant Moſes, in the xviith of Deuteronomy, requires of him that ſhall reign over his people, that he have a copy of the law of the Lord by him, and that he read therein all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and to keep all the words of that law; ſo in the xiiith of that book he gives a command to put to death the falſe prophet, and the brother that ſpeaks to his people to turn them away from the Lord their God; and the reaſons taken from the nature of the duty, whereby he perſuades unto the obedience thereof, are perpetual and no leſs binding unto us now, than to them of old. How ſtrongly doth the Lord plead, in the xxiid of Deuteronomy, againſt toleration and falſe worſhip, and all the occaſions thereof, and provocations and incitements thereto? and how ſevere is he about the removing and deſtroying all theſe, and in tying all his people to one way according to the rule of his word? and what peremptory commands are there given unto them concerning both? Was not the blaſphemer ſtoned unto death, Lev. xxiv. 10. It was the great care and ſingular commendation of Joſhua, Samuel, David, Aſa, Jehoſhaphat, Hezekiah, Joſiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, Zorobabel, and of ſuch as judged or reigned well in Iſrael or Judah, that they preſerved religion and reformation in integrity, reſtored it when it was fallen and corrupted, by deſtroying idolatry, and eſtabliſhing the pure ordinances of God. Aſa made a covenant, and commanded Judah to ſeek the Lord God of their fathers, 2 Chron. xiv. Jehoſhaphat went out throughout the people, from Beerſheba to mount Ephraim, and brought them back unto the Lord God of their fathers, 2 Chron.

Chron. xix. Joſiah made a covenant, and cauſed all the people to ſtand to it, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 32. And the children of Judah, after their return from Babylon, made a covenant, and entered into a curſe, and into an oath to walk in God's law, and to obſerve and do all the commandments of the Lord their God, Neh. ix. 38. x. 29. It is left as a note of perpetual infamy upon Jeroboam, that he cauſed Iſrael to ſin by erecting the calves at Dan and Bethel, and ſuffering the people to go a whoring after the ſame, and as it was the cauſe of the deſtruction of his houſe, ſo at laſt of the extermination of Iſrael; and it is ſeveral times obſerved by the Holy Ghoſt as a fault in ſeveral of the kings of Judah that the high places were not taken away, and Judah itſelf was alſo many times ſore plagued of God, and at laſt carried into captivity becauſe of their tolerating of error and idolatry; and whoſo well ponders the ſtory of Joſephus the Jewiſh writer, will find that both in divine and politic conſiderations, the toleration of divers ſects amongſt them was the main cauſe of their ruin.

Some ſay, that the coercive power of the magiſtrate had place in the Old Teſtament, becauſe of an infallible judgment of direction that was always preſent with them, in the Urim and Thummim, for applying of the law to thoſe who were guilty; but beſides, that this overthroweth all eccleſiaſtic as well as civil cenſures under the New Teſtament, as ſuppoſing the neceſſity of an infallible direction to the right proceeding unto a ſentence againſt a blaſphemer or heretic, what needed then any judicial proceſs or the teſtimony of witneſſes againſt ſuch? This argues that the procedure was to be in an ordinary way, according to a known ſtanding law, as in caſes of the ſecond table: And it hath as little ſtrength that the magiſtrate then did theſe things, not as a magiſtrate, but as a type of Jeſus Chriſt, ſeeing the kings of the heathen, ſuch as Artaxerxes, Nebuchadnezzar and Darius, made decrees hereabouts, whoſe practice is commended by the Spirit of God: And ſome, knowing no other ſhift, would have the Old Teſtament laid aſide in all the queſtion, and have proofs only from the New; but did not the prophets of old foretel that there ſhould be ſuch a thing under the New Teſtament? Zachariah, in his xiiith telleth, that in the day that the fountain ſhall be opened in the houſe of David for ſin and for uncleanneſs, the prophet that ſpeaks lies in the name of the Lord ſhall not live, but be thruſt through; and as Jeſus Chriſt commands us to beware of falſe prophets, Matth. vii, 15. and the

apoſtle Paul to mark them who cauſe diviſions, Rom. xvi. 17. and wiſhes that thoſe who trouble the churches of Galatia were cut off, Gal. v. 12. So the ſame apoſtle, Rom. xii. tells us, that the magiſtrate is the miniſter of God, a revenger to execute wrath on thoſe that do evil; neither is this wrath confined to the deeds of unrighteouſneſs, and theſe things only that are prejudicial unto men, and troubles the peace of the common-wealth, but is alſo to be extended to theſe things that are diſhonourable to God and the peace of the church; for it cannot be ſhown that any part of that power which magiſtrates had under the Old Teſtament is repealed under the new, neither can any convincing reaſon be brought, why it ſhould be of narrower extent now nor then Are not blaſphemies, hereſies and errors diſhonourable to God, and deſtructive unto ſouls as well now as of old? and are not men as prone to run into theſe things? and have they not need of as many remedies and reſtraints now as of old? Nay, are not theſe evil works, as well as the works of injuſtice and unrighteouſneſs? They are high tranſgreſſions againſt the firſt and great commandment of the law, and Moſes, ſpeaking of the puniſhing of them, calls them the evil which we are to put away from amongſt us, Deut. xiii. 5. And the apoſtle Paul deſires us to beware of men that are polluted therewith as evil workers, Phil. iii. 2. and the ſame apoſtle calls them evil men and ſeducers, 2 Tim. iii. 13. And the apoſtle John calls their works evil deeds, 2 John x. Therefore if liberty be granted in theſe, we know no cauſe why men that can in a handſome way pretend conſcience for it, ſhould be denied liberty to run into exceſs and riot, and to commit all ſort of uncleanneſs and practiſe all wickedneſs with greedineſs? which makes us the leſs to wonder, that it is propounded that nothing may be puniſhed with death but murder. Thus far do the principles of libertines lead them, that the moſt monſtrous and unnatural abominations that can be are not to be puniſhed with death: neither belike ſhould murder be excepted, if the carnal deſire of the preſervation of natural life did not lead them to it. We know not with what words of wonder and aſtoniſhment to expreſs ourſelves upon theſe things. Paſs over to the iſles of Chittim, and ſee and ſend unto Kedar, and conſider diligently, and ſee if ſuch a thing hath been heard of of old, or of late amongſt the moſt brutiſh and barbarous nations? Such a curſed toleration as this will not only make every thing in religion appear to be uncertain,

uncertain, rend the churches and diſturb the ſtate, and trample all ordinances, order and government under foot, and bring forth many blaſphemies and abominations, but is like to baniſh religion and righteouſneſs quite out of the land, and at laſt make a hell upon earth.

And the thing in itſelf is not more ſtrange unto us, than that theſe who have lifted up their hands unto heaven, and ſworn before God, angels and men to extirpate popery, hereſy, error, ſchiſm, ſuperſtition, idolatry and profaneneſs, and whatſoever is contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs, and who do ſo much pretend unto holineſs, and have been made partakers of ſo many mercies and deliverances, ſhould have ſo far forgotten the oath and covenant of God, as to plead for, and proclaim a liberty unto all theſe things. The ſolemn league and covenant was in the beginning, amongſt all the means that could be thought of, looked upon and entertained as the ſtrongeſt bulwark of religion, and fureſt foundation of a laſting union and peace betwixt the kingdoms, and the beſt way for bringing dow[illegible]he enemies of both, and being confirmed by the oath of [illegible], cannot be repealed nor altered by any power or author[illegible]y on earth, but obliges both kingdoms unto all the duties c[illegible]tained therein, which makes us to wonder that men ſhould be ſo unhappily bold as to ſport with the oath of God, and mock the Almighty, who is a ſevere avenger of all ſuch things. And albeit we have no cauſe to repent of covenanting with England, as having done a neceſſary duty, and laid the foundation of a glorious work, which we truſt ſhall be perfected maugre all the oppoſition of men, and that we reſolve to adhere to that ſolemn league and covenant as long as we live; yet have we reaſon to complain of the exceeding great levity and inconſtancy of ſome of thoſe with whom we had to do, becauſe of the ſad reproach that is thereby brought upon the cauſe of God, and the great prejudice that doth thereby redound to the kingdom of his ſon Jeſus Chriſt.

Neither is it the leaſt part of our grief, that as a throne is ſet up for Satan, and the houſe of God laid waſte, ſo the civil government is exceedingly ſhaken, if not quite ſubverted and overthrown. We plead not for tyranny, or arbitrary power either in kings or parliaments, neither are we to own or juſtify any man in his ſin; but we may remember what adverſaries have many times caſt upon both kingdoms, and what both have oftener than once printed and publiſhed to

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the world for their vindication in this; and if after ſo many public profeſſions and ſolemn atteſtations to the contrary, the foundations ſhall be razed, monarchy be deſtroyed, and parliaments ſubverted by an imaginary and pretended argreement of the people, as it would deſtroy the league and covenant, and cauſe the adverſary to blaſpheme and inſult, ſo it cannot but be the cauſe of many miſeries and calamities unto theſe kingdoms. If power be originally in the people, and all of them do equally ſhare in the privilege of liberty and freedom, how comes it to paſs that a few take upon them to impoſe this agreement upon others, and that it is deſired that the oppoſers may be puniſhed with death? Let it be yielded that ſome at firſt may condeſcend upon the model without the knowledge of the whole body, yet when it is offered unto them, what if the one half, or the greater part, ſhall refuſe to conſent or ſubmit thereto, ſhall they be compelled by others to do it, and deſtroyed if they will not obey? Is not this to take power over theſe that have equal power with themſelves, and to encroach upon the freedom of theſe who are as free as themſelves? If it be ſaid, that they do but impoſe in things neceſſary, that concern common equity and freedom, we demand who are judges of theſe things? Have not theſe who refuſe as much power and freedom to judge, as thoſe who would impoſe it upon them? and if they judge it to be contrary to their freedom, who can controul them herein, without encroaching thereupon, and offering violence to their conſciences who may conceive ſuch a way neither to ſuit with religion nor righteouſneſs? And to ſpeak nothing of the troubles that are like to ariſe otherwiſe, may not this open again the iſſues of blood, and embroil the land in a new war betwixt theſe who ſhall refuſe, and theſe who ſhall impoſe ſuch a model, wherein men may unhappily loſe both themſelves and their liberty, whilſt they ſeek to be too much free? Were it not better to preſerve monarchy and the privileges of parliament, walking in the middle betwixt tyranny and anarchy, betwixt arbitrary government and confuſion.

We know that ſuch a way is looked upon by ſome as the beſt foundation of ſafety, but we know nothing more like to bring ruin and deſtruction: And therefore pitying theſe who are gone out of the way, we do, from the compaſſion which we have to their ſouls, earneſtly, and in the name of the Lord, beſeech all theſe in England who plead for toleration, the laying aſide of the covenant and change of the civil government,

vernment, to conſider theſe things impartially. 1. What fair profeſſions and promiſes were made unto this kingdom, to perſuade them to join in covenant with England, and how often before and ſince that time theſe things have been renewed by letters, declarations and remonſtrances unto theſe in this land, petitions to the king, ordinances of the houſes, and letters to the kirks abroad; all this is ſtill upon record, and will bear witneſs before the Lord, and unto the following generations, againſt the levity, perverſeneſs and perjury of thoſe who have ſworn the league and covenant, and gad ſo much about to change their way. 2. That the league and covenant was the firſt foundation of their victories and ſucceſs, and of the ruin of the malignant party in England. We need not put them in mind at what low ebb the parliament's forces were at the contriving thereof, and how ſoon the Lord gave teſtimony from heaven, by victory over the enemy, of his approbation of the ſame, and how from that day forward they proſpered, and the enemy fell before them ſtill. 3. That the Lord hath always been a ſevere avenger of the breaches of oaths and covenants perſonal, and which concerns the things of men, much more national, and which concerns the things of God. 4. That never any perverted the truth, and corrupted the worſhip of God and proſpered. 5. What ſhall be the advantage, nay how great ſhall be the loſs of all the expenee of blood and of pains that theſe kingdoms have been at, if for all this, we ſhall reap nothing but toleration and confuſion? have we laboured in the fire to remove one corrupt religion, and to bring in many in its ſtead; to put down tyranny and ſet up anarchy? 6. Whether this be ſuch a teſtimony of gratitude, as the Lord calls for at their hands in lieu of all his mercies, and giving unto them victory over all their enemies. 7. Whether ſuch things beſeems thoſe who would be called ſaints, and pretend to be for the Lord, and uſe his name in all their profeſſions and undertakings? 8. Whether ſuch proceedings do not bring a ſad reproach and heavy imputation upon the work of God in theſe kingdoms? In nothing do the popiſh, prelatical and malignant party more inſult; and is it a light matter to cauſe the enemy to blaſpheme? 9. How ſore the weak are ſtumbled, and the hearts of the godly throughout all the proteſtant churches wounded. We have ſuffered many things, but nothing ſo heavy to our ſpirits as this. 10. If ſuch a way be not contrary to the whole ſtrain of God's word, and to the

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practice of all the ſaints ſince the beginning of the world unto this day? 4. What ſhall be the end of theſe things, and the many ſad and doleful conſequents that ſhall follow thereupon? If from theſe and the like conſiderations any be moved to take warning to deſiſt from the evil of their way, we ſhall therein rejoice and glorify God in their behalf: But if they ſhall refuſe to hearken, we have diſcharged our conſciences; and, in the name of the kirk of Scotland, whoſe ſervants we are, we do diſſent from, and proteſt againſt ſuch proceedings, as deſtructive to religion, the ſolemn league and covenant, the work of uniformity, and the civil government; and ſhall wait for the ſalvation of the Lord.

In the next place, albeit we do not deſire to add ſorrow unto any man's affliction, but rather, if any ſuffer for righteouſneſs ſake, to comfort him; yet we were not faithful if we did not put our brethren in England in mind of their ſlothfulneſs and negligence in the Lord's work, that in this day of their trouble they may be humbled becauſe of their want of zeal for God and his cauſe. The Lord put into the hands of the parliament of England many precious opportunities and fair occaſions to have extirpated popery, error, hereſy, ſchiſm and profaneneſs, and to have eſtabliſhed reformation, and the government of the houſe of God; many petitions and ſupplications from many in England, and declarations and remonſtrances and letters from the parliament and general aſſembly and their commiſſioners in this land, were tendered unto them concerning this thing; yet notwithſtanding of all theſe, did they ſtill ſuffer the houſe of God to lie waſte, and the evil to grow which had been eaſily reſiſted in the beginning, but now is gone over the face of the land like a flood, and hath troden under foot their own power and authority. It hath been the Lord's way in carrying on of his work, to ſtain the pride of all glory, and to break and put down all thoſe powers that have not exalted him and promoted the kingdom of his Son. And though we do not juſtify theſe inſolent attempts upon the houſes, yet we cannot but deſire the members to behold the hand of the Moſt High, and to read their ſin engraven in their judgment. It is a righteous thing with the Lord to abaſe all thoſe that will not honour him. The Lord certainly hath a great controverſy againſt them for encroaching upon the royal ſceptre of Jeſus Chriſt, and denying unto him any external government over his houſe, but ſuch as is dependent upon them, by aſ-

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ſuming unto themſelves the ultimate deciſion of all eccleſiaſtic cauſes and kirk cenſures: And doubtleſs the Lord is alſo highly diſpleaſed with their proceedings in the treaty at Newport in reference to religion and covenant, concerning which, they accepted of ſuch conceſſions from his majeſty as were dangerous and deſtructive unto both. We wiſh that they may now at laſt ſee their negligence and preſumption in theſe things, and be men of wiſdom to hear the voice of the rod, and who hath appointed it, if their ſoul be humbled for their ſin, and if they ſhall take upon them the vows of God for giving unto Jeſus Chriſt his due, and doing whatſoever is commanded by the God of heaven for the houſe of the God of heaven, who knows but the Lord may take away their reproach, and reſtore them to their dignity and power.

And though we doubt not but many in England have theſe years paſt mourned for the deſolations of the houſe of God, and for the riſe and growth of ſo many errors in that land, and have poured forth their ſupplications before the Lord for a remedy of theſe things; and that we are not ignorant what a conſiderable number of miniſters have done in their ſermons, and printed books, and teſtimonies, yet we ſhall deſire all that love truth and holineſs in that land, to conſider whether they have ſo timeouſly, and with that courage and zeal that was convenient appeared for the Lord, and acquit themſelves in their duty in reference to religion and the ſolemn league and covenant, and if any find themſelves faulty, to mourn for it, and to pray for mercy, and more of the Spirit of Chriſt, that they may hereafter be more faithful, and do their duty boldly and without fear? As many in England mourned with us in the day of our diſtreſs before the Lord in our behalf, ſo we and all the godly in this land, pour forth our ſupplications to God in private and in public for them: And albeit we will not take upon us to preſcribe, yet as the ſervants of the living God, who have obtained mercy in ſome meaſure to be faithful, and have found ſuch a way to be profitable amongſt ourſelves, we exhort all our brethren in England to acknowledge their iniquities before the Lord, eſpecially the breaches of that ſolemn league and covenant which was ſo publicly ſworn, before God, angels and men, and to renew their oath and vows in his ſight, which we doubt not, if gone about in ſincerity, ſhall be attended with a bleſſing and ſucceſs from heaven. It hath been the Lord's diſpenſion in theſe kingdoms, for the moſt part, to leave a branch of hope

in the one kingdom, when the other was like to periſh, and to ſuffer enemies to grow to a great height of inſolence and power, and then to bring them down: And therefore albeit the floods lift their voice and make a noiſe, yet we know no cauſe why the Lord's people ſhould wax faint or caſt away their confidence, the Lord on high is more mighty than the noiſe of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the ſea; his word is eſtabliſhed in heaven, and his teſtimonies are very ſure: And beſide the many great and precious promiſes which he hath given unto us, and his goodneſs to his ſaints of old, he hath furniſhed his people in theſe lands with ſo many experiences of his mighty hand and ſtretched-out arm, working ſalvation and delivery for them, that it were a ſhame for any amongſt them to wax faint, and not to believe. For yet a little while, he that ſhall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the juſt ſhall live by faith; but if any man draw back, his ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him.

A. KER.

EDINBURGH, 18. *Jan.* 1649.

The Return of the Eſtates of Parliament upon the TESTIMONY, communicated unto them by the Commiſſioners of the General Aſſembly, and their concurrence with the ſame.

THE Eſtates of Parliament preſently convened, taking to their moſt ſerious conſideration *the ſeaſonable teſtimony againſt toleration, and the preſent proceeding of ſectaries and their abettors in England, in reference to religion and government, with an admonition and exhortation to their brethren there, from the Commiſſioners of the Genenal Aſſembly of the church of Scotland* communicated unto them by you; and pondering the preſent ſad and ſtrange condition of affairs in their neighbour kingdom of England repreſented therein, and in ſeveral other papers come to their knowledge; they do return unto you their hearty thanks both for your good correſpondence (which the parliament will with all chearfulneſs entertain) and for your great care and faithfulneſs in giving ſuch neceſſary and ſeaſonable warnings and teſtimonies againſt

gainſt the dangers of the times on all hands, at all occaſions: And do heartily concur in the grounds thereof againſt toleration and the preſent proceedings of ſectaries in England, in reference to religion and government, and in the admonitions and encouragements ſo fully expreſt in the ſaid paper: And do moſt willingly add this our teſtimony thereunto, that our brethren of England may be the more moved by the mouth of two witneſſes, and eſpecially ſuch as together with them ſtand and fall, and are covenanted with them for mutual good, to lay thoſe things to heart, and to abſtain from all ſuch ſinful and dangerous courſes; and the faithful not to faint under theſe afflictions, or to omit any neceſſary teſtimonies or duty againſt the corruption of the time: And becauſe there have been ſeveral aſperſions publiſhed in printed pamphlets, for the ſtrengthening of the hands of thoſe who go on in theſe ſinful ways, and for diſcouraging the hearts of theſe who are ſuffering under them; therefore the Eſtates of Parliament, after diligent enquiry at all the members of this court, upon their public and ſolemn oath, both concerning themſelves and others, Do declare, and can aſſure their brethren of England, that they cannot find that either this kingdom or any perſon thereof, had any knowledge of, or acceſſion unto the late proceedings of the Engliſh army in relation to the king's perſon, or the houſes and reſtrained members thereof, but are very confident there is no ground for ſuch aſperſions. On the other hand, ſo ſoon as this parliament was convened and conſtituted, and heard of the preſent poſture of affairs, they being no ways ſatisfied with their proceedings, and the reaſons thereof, publiſhed to the world; and being convinced of the dangerous conſequences thereof, and calamities likely to follow thereupon, they did give preſent inſtructions to their commiſſioners, upon many reaſons founded on the obligations and declarations made between, and by both kingdoms (of which the matter of fact is fully expreſſed by the Paper given in by our commiſſioners on the 5th of January inſtant, to the Speaker of the Houſe of Commons, in our name, and according to our mind, herewith communicated to you) to preſs a delay of all procedures againſt the king's perſon, the prince his right of ſucceſſion, or the fundamental government of the kingdom, until this kingdom were heard to repreſent their intereſt and deſires; and, in caſe of their refuſal, that they ſhould enter, in the name of this kingdom, their diſſent and proteſt, that as this nation

is free from all knowledge of, and acceſſion to theſe deſigns and practices, ſo they may be free of all the calamities, miſeries and confuſions which may follow thereupon to theſe diſtracted kingdoms. And as our conſtant reſolution and earneſt deſire to preſerve inviolably the peace and union between the kingdoms, will evidently appear to any who will read (beſide all our former actions and ſufferings for it) our Act of Indiction of this preſent parliament, and our act repealing all paſt in the laſt parliament or committee of eſtates for the late unlawful engagement againſt England. And as ye are wineſſes of our keeping a ſolemn day of humiliation, not only for our own ſins and miſeries, but alſo for the ſins and diſtreſſes lying on our dear brethren, and for ſeeking the Lord's direction to us, that we may know and perform all the duties which the Lord requires of us at ſuch a time, after ſuch judgments and deliverances on his part, ſuch an acknowledgement and renewed covenant on our part, not only in relation to our own affairs at home, but alſo to what may concern religion, king and kingdoms, according to the Solemn League and Covenant in theſe united nations; ſo we declare that it is our conſtant reſolution, with God's aſſiſtance, to give all ſeaſonable teſtimonies, and do all neceſſary duties within our power and calling, for the preſervation of the begun reformation againſt toleration of all religion, and of the fundamental government againſt anarchy and confuſion; and for continuing and preſerving the peace and union between theſe kingdoms, and all the bands thereof, ſo often acknowledged and expreſſed in their treaties, eſpecially *one king, one covenant, one religion;* and for the obſervance of the manifold declarations emitted between and by both kingdoms to the world, in the poſitive and neceſſary duties for purſuance of all the ends of the Solemn League and Covenant. And to this effect we are and ſhall be moſt ready to deal and interpoſe in all earneſtneſs and ſincerity of heart, and by all lawful and neceſſary means with all whom it may concern, for ſettling peace and truth in theſe kingdoms, upon the grounds and propoſitions ſo often agreed unto, and ſo long inſiſted upon by theſe two nations, and upon what further ſhall be found ſafe and neceſſary for the removing of theſe diſtempers, and preventing new iſſues of blood, calamities and confuſions in theſe kingdoms, which the Searcher of hearts knoweth to be the earneſt deſire, and firm reſolution of this court and kingdom.

LOWDON, *Cancell.*

I. P. D. P.

The PAPER of the 5th of July, given in by the Commiſſioners for the kingdom of Scotland, to the Speaker of the Houſe of Commons, mentioned in the aforeſaid Return.

SIR,

THE Committee of Eſtates of the kingdom of Scotland, underſtanding that the honourable Houſes of Parliament were proceeding in a treaty for peace with his majeſty, did, about the beginning of the laſt month, authorize us to preſent propoſitions to his majeſty; and particularly, to deal with him and the honourable Houſes, for eſtabliſhing the covenant and preſbyterial government, the Confeſſion of Faith, Directory for Worſhip, and Catechiſm, for preventing the toleration of idolatry, popery, prelacy, ſuperſtition, blaſphemy, hereſy and ſchiſm, and for perfecting the great work of reformation and uniformity according to the Covenant; the ſubſtance whereof hath been formerly communicated, in a letter from the committee of eſtates to both houſes, and by one of our number, upon his reception at the committee of Derby-houſe, by order from the houſes of parliament. But to our great grief, we do perceive, that the diſtractions of this kingdom are, beyond our expectation, grown exceeding high; that a force hath been placed on the paſſages to the houſes, which, during tranſactions of higheſt concernment, hath impriſoned and ſecluded a great number of members of parliament, and given occaſion to many others to withdraw, becauſe they find they cannot act as in a free parliament; that applications are made to you, for proceeding againſt the king, to take away his life, and for changing the government of this kingdom; and ſtrong endeavours are uſed to overturn the whole work of reformation, to caſt off the miniſtry, and introduce a toleration of all religions and forms of worſhip, and ſo, in effect, to deſtroy the cauſe wherein both nations have been engaged, and fruſtrate all the ends of the ſolemn league and covenant, which both kingdoms have ſworn, with uplifted hands to Almighty God, ſincerely, really, and conſtantly to perform. The conſideration of theſe things doth exceedingly trouble us, and fill our hearts with fears, that, as they are for the preſent, matter of great provocation of the wrath of God againſt us, diſhonourable to his name, and a reproach to religion; ſo, if perſiſted in, that they ſhall great-

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ly weaken and divide us amongſt ourſelves, unite foreign enemies againſt us, advance the popiſh intereſt, loſe Ireland, and in end, prove deſtructive to the reformed religion, and to the peace and happineſs of theſe kingdoms.

In the year 1640, when theſe kingdoms were oppreſſed under the yoke and tyranny of the prelates, who then were far advanced in the deſign, to introduce popery, the kingdom of Scotland did join their endeavours with this kingdom, to procure a free parliament here, looking upon it, as a chief mean, by the bleſſing of God, to give a check to the deſigns of the prelates, who were ſtudying the change of religion, and to the enterprizes of evil counſellors about the king, who were endeavouring to eſtabliſh an arbitrary and tyrannical government; and afterward, when through power and prevalency of papiſts, prelates, and malignants, this kingdom was diſtreſſed, the kingdom of Scotland did enter into a ſolemn league and covenant with this nation, for reformation and defence of religion, the honour and happineſs of the king, and the peace and ſafety of the three kingdoms; and particularly, for bringing the churches of God therein, to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, Confeſſion of Faith, Form of Church-government, Directory for Worſhip, and Catechiſing; for extirpation of popery, prelacy, ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound doctrine; for mutual preſervation of the rights and privileges of parliaments, and liberties of the kingdoms; for diſcovering of incendiaries, malignants and evil inſtruments, that hinder reformation of religion, divide the king from his people, or one of the kingdoms from another, or make any faction or party among the people, contrary to the league and covenant, that they might be brought to public trial and puniſhment; for preſerving peace and union betwixt the kingdoms, and defending one another in this cauſe; for continuing therein all the days of our lives zealouſly and conſtantly, againſt all oppoſition; and for promoting the ſame, according to our power, againſt all lets and impediments whatſoever.

In purſuance of the ſolemn league and covenant, both houſes of parliament have often declared, that they will eſtabliſh the reformation of religion, extirpate popery and prelacy, and ſuppreſs hereſy and ſchiſm; and that they will maintain the fundamental government of this kingdom by king, lords, and commons. And when the common enemy being

being ſubdued, the Scottiſh army was to go out of this kingdom, in the beginning of the year 1647, and his majeſty, by conſent of both kingdoms, was to come to Holdenby; the houſes of parliament did declare, both to the king, and to the kingdom of Scotland, that reſpect ſhould be had to the ſafety and preſervation of his majeſty's perſon, in the preſervation and defence of the true religion, and liberties of the kingdoms, according to the Covenant; and when the king ſhould be at Holdenby, and the Scottiſh forces gone out of this kingdom, that they would join with the kingdom of Scotland, in employing their beſt endeavours, to procure his majeſty's aſſent to the propoſitions agreed on by both kingdoms; and in caſe the king ſhould not give his aſſent thereto, that the houſes were reſolved ſtill to maintain the happy union already ſettled between the two kingdoms, according to covenant and treaties. The parliament of Scotland did at the ſame time alſo publiſh a declaration of their intentions (whereof one copy was delivered to his majeſty, and another to the houſes of parliament) that in the interim (until his majeſty ſhould give ſatisfaction to both kingdoms in the propoſitions of peace) there ſhould be no harm, prejudice, injury or violence done to his royal perſon; that there ſhould be no change of government, other than had been for the three years preceding; and that his poſterity ſhould be no ways prejudiced in their lawful ſucceſſion to the crown and government of theſe kingdoms.

Theſe being the engagements of both kingdoms jointly together, and ſeverally one to another, for the ends aforeſaid; we hold it our duty to endeavour, that reformation of religion be ſettled and eſtabliſhed as is before expreſſed; and eſpecially, that the toleration of idolatry, popery, blaſphemy, hereſy and ſchiſm be prevented, leſt we partake in other mens ſins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues: That the rights and privileges of parliament may be preſerved; that there may be no change of the fundamental government; and, that there may be no harm, injury, or violence offered to his majeſty's perſon, the very thought whereof, the kingdom of Scotland hath always abhorred, as may appear by all their proceedings and declarations: And the houſes of parliament, have often upon ſeveral occaſions, expreſſed a deteſtation thereof, in their declarations. Wherefore, we do expect, that there ſhall be no proceeding againſt his perſon, which cannot but continue and encreaſe the great diſtractions of

theſe

theſe kingdoms, and involve us in many difficulties, miſeries, and confuſions: But that by the free councils of both houſes of the parliament of England, and with the advice and conſent of the parliament of Scotland (which is now ſitting) ſuch courſe may be taken, in relation to him, as may be for the good and happineſs of theſe kingdoms, both having an unqueſtionable intereſt therein. We are

Your affectionate friends and ſervants,

Jan. 6th 1649. *ſubſcribitur*,

LOTHIAN,
JO. CHEISLY,
WILLIAM GLENDONING.

For the honourable William Lenthall, eſq; ſpeaker of the houſe of commons.

PREFACE

OF THE

TESTIMONY

OF THE

MINISTERS OF PERTH AND FIFE.

THIS Teſtimony was intended long ago by the miniſters of the goſpel who are for the proteſtation in the ſynod of Perth, and being brought to ſome perfection about fifteen or ſixteen months ſince by ſome of theſe brethren, and ſome other reverend and godly miniſters in the ſynod of Fife: a copy thereof ſubſcribed by their hands, was a little thereafter offered unto the late Lord Protector his council in Scotland, that being read by them, it might alſo have been tranſmitted to him and his council at London: The printing of it, though intended immediately thereafter, hath hitherto been retarded by ſeveral emergencies of providence. It is now put to the preſs, becauſe, beſides that written copies are oftentimes uncorrect, and by reſcribing, come to be vitiated; and that ſo many as would either ſatisfy the true intent of the thing, or the minds of theſe who are deſirous to peruſe it, could not conveniently be gotten, the continuance and increaſe of many of the errors and evils that are witneſſed againſt therein, with the deſire of the reverend and worthy brethren, whoſe letter is hereunto ſubjoined, do plead for it: How it came at firſt not to be ſubſcribed by theſe brethren, they themſelves do, we truſt, give a ſatisfying account thereof in their own letter, wherein they do alſo give their reaſon for joining in, and publiſhing of the ſame at this time. If there be ſome things in it that do not ſo quadrat with the preſent ſtate of the time, by reaſon of the late changes, that is not material as to the true intent of the Teſtimony, which when it was firſt given, did witneſs againſt the evils therein mentioned, in the ſhape wherein it then found them, and it may well be admitted a witneſs againſt, as they now are, there being little or no material change appearing to the better. The Lord give a bleſſing to what is witneſſed in ſimplicity of heart, and with a warrant from the word of truth.

Nov. 29th, 1659.

The TESTIMONY of the Miniſters of the goſpel underſubſcribing, unto the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline and government of the kirk of Scotland, and to the National Covenant of Scotland, and to the Solemn League and Covenant betwixt the three nations, of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and to the work of uniformity in religion, in one Confeſſion of Faith, Form of Church Government, Directory of Worſhip, and Catechiſing; and againſt the errors, hereſies, and blaſphemies now on foot in theſe nations, that are contrary and deſtructive thereunto; eſpecially againſt that vaſt toleration in things religious, lately framed into a law, and proclaimed throughout this nation.

Amos iii. 13, 14. *Hear ye, and teſtify in the houſe of Jacob, ſaith the Lord God, the God of hoſts, That in the day that I ſhall viſit the tranſgreſſions of Iſrael upon him, I will alſo viſit the altars of Bethel, and the horns of the altar ſhall be cut off, and fall to the ground.*

Rev. xii. 11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony.*

PURE religion, which is revealed by the only begotten Son, who is in the boſom of the Father, and is contained in the ſcriptures of truth, being the way whereby the ſons of men are taught to glorify the Lord their Maker, and to attain happineſs and ſalvation unto themſelves, is, of all enjoyments, the moſt excellent and neceſſary, the glory and crown, whether of nations, or of families, or of particular perſons, and that which every one in his ſtation is moſt bound to purſue and preſerve, and plead for: Therefore have all theſe who have inclined their ear to wiſdom, and applied their hearts unto underſtanding, ſought it as ſilver, and ſearched for it as hid treaſures, and have judged the merchandize thereof better than the merchandize of ſilver, and the gain thereof better than fine gold; and the Lord's worthies and witneſſes have in every generation, according to their meaſure, appeared and put forth themſelves in excellent wreſtlings, by fervent ſupplications unto God, and ſerious endeavours with men, and faithful teſtimonies proclaimed upon the high places; and, when need was, confirmed with their blood for the attainment

ment and preſervation, and vindication of the precious truths and ordinances of God. And ſeeing we are not only Chriſtians by profeſſion, born in a viſible church, and in our baptiſm ſolemnly devoted and engaged unto the Lord, to be his, and to be for him and his intereſts upon the earth; and therefore by virtue of our general calling as Chriſtians, bound by the holy commandment of the great and eternal God, in our ſtations, earneſtly to contend for the faith once delivered to the ſaints, Jude 3. and to teſtify againſt the things that are deſtructive thereunto, Jer. x. 11. Amos iii. 13, 14. but alſo by our particular calling, miniſters and watchmen in the houſe of God: And therefore upon that account, in a ſpecial way ſet for the defence of the goſpel, Phil. 17. and bound to maintain and vindicate the glory of the Lord of hoſts, 1 Kings xix. 14. and to confeſs Jeſus Chriſt before men, Matth. x. 32. and to cry aloud and ſpare not, and to lift up our voices like a trumpet to ſhew his people their ſins, and the houſe of Iſrael their tranſgreſſions, Iſa. lviii. 1. and to ſpeak unto them all that he commands us, as we would not be found rebellious unto God, and would not have him to conſume us before men, Jer. i. 14. Ezek. ii. 8. And conſidering that we have been witneſſes, not only to the many ſolemn public profeſſions and engagements of others in the behalf of God, and of his truth, but that alſo we ourſelves have once and again, (beſides private and perſonal engagements) taken upon us that ſacred and ſolemn tie of the public national covenant, and of the ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations; wherein, we all ſubſcribe, and each one of us for himſelf, with our hands lifted up to the moſt high God, do ſwear, That we ſhall ſincerely, really and conſtantly, through the grace of God, in our ſeveral places and callings, endeavour the preſervation of the reformed religion in the kirk of Scotland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, againſt our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the beſt reformed churches; and ſhall endeavour to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms, to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, confeſſion of faith, form of church government, directory for worſhip, and catechiſing, that we and our poſterity after us, may, as brethren, live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midſt of us. 2. That we ſhall in like manner,

without reſpect of perſons, endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound doctrine and to the power of godlineſs, leſt we partake in other mens ſins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues, and that the Lord may be one, and his name one in the three kingdoms: And that in maintaining and purſuing this common cauſe of religion, we ſhall not ſuffer ourſelves, directly or indirectly, by whatſoever combination, perſuaſion, or terror, to be divided or withdrawn from this bleſſed union and conjunction, whether to make defection to the contrary part, or to give ourſelves to a deteſtable indifferency or neutrality in this cauſe, but ſhall all the days of our lives, zealouſly and conſtantly continue therein againſt all oppoſition, and promote the ſame according to our power, againſt all lets and impediments whatſoever; and what we are not able of ourſelves to ſuppreſs or overcome, we ſhall reveal and make known, that it may be timely prevented or removed, all which we ſhall do as in the ſight of God. Therefore having ſeriouſly weighed the ſtate of religion in this church at this time, and the manifold injuries that have been, and are daily offered and done to the truth of God, and precious ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, and to the national covenant, and ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations, and to the liberties and privileges of the church and government, and officers of the houſe of God, by which God is highly diſhonoured and provoked, and the Lord's ſanctuary profaned, and the throne of his glory defaced, and the kingdom of his Son undermined, and many ſouls involved in dreadful guiltineſs and deſtroying ſnares, day by day, and more expoſed to the hazard of many and ſtrong temptations. We do, for the delivering our own ſouls from the guilt of theſe things, and acquitting ourſelves in the duty we owe unto God and his church, in the preſent and following generations, eſpecially to theſe of our flocks, with the charge of whoſe ſouls we are in a more peculiar way intruſted, and that we may, if the Lord ſo will convince theſe who are guilty, and perſuade them to repentance, at leaſt, that we may bear witneſs for the truth againſt the evil of their way, hold ourſelves bound to bear teſtimony, 1. Unto the way wherein we worſhip the God of our fathers, we mean, the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government of the church of Scotland, believing the ſame to be that which is written in the law and the prophets, and in the teſtament

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of Jeſus Chriſt, and to the national covenant of Scotland, and the ſolemn league and covenant of Scotland, England, and Ireland, and to the work of uniformity in religion. And next, againſt all the injuries done unto, and encroachments, violations, and breaches made upon theſe; eſpecially againſt that vaſt toleration in things religious, a miſchief lately framed into a law in theſe nations, whereby the tie and obligation of theſe covenants is wholly caſt looſe, and turned into oblivion, and countenance, and protection, and encouragement is allowed, not only to many errors about the ſuperſtructures of religion, but even anent theſe things that deſtroyeth the foundations, and to give warning to the Lord's people, eſpecially to theſe whoſe ſouls we are called to watch for, of ſome neceſſary duties incumbent upon them in this hour of temptation.

In the firſt place, therefore, we do with thankful hearts acknowledge, and joyful lips bear record unto the wonderful power and goodneſs of God, which according to the prophecies and promiſes revealed of old, *That he would give the heathen for an inheritance, and the outmoſt parts of the earth for a poſſeſſion unto his anointed One, and that the iſles ſhould wait for his law*, was graciouſly pleaſed many hundred years ago, and a little after the riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, to give light unto the Gentiles, to pity our forefathers then mancipated unto the ſervice of dumb idols, and worſhippers of the hoſt of heaven; yea, of devils and infernal ſpirits, and to viſit them with the light of the glorious and bleſſed goſpel, which having been firſt preached unto, and received by many private perſons, was afterward, about the year 205, received by the king and many peers of the land; ſo that in a ſhort time the whole nation became Chriſtians, and was bleſſed and honoured of God for fundry generations, with many eminent profeſſors and paſtors, famous for learning and holineſs, and piety, and for their pains and ſucceſs in the work of the goſpel, both at home and abroad, until at laſt, with the reſt of moſt of the Chriſtian churches in Europe, it was involved in the darkneſs of popiſh ſuperſtition and idolatry, to which it was in bondage for many years; yet ſo, that there was always a remnant through grace who did not receive the mark of the beaſt, but did overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their teſtimony, and did not love their lives unto the death.

Next, we do with the ſame thankful mind acknowledge and

and proclaim that marvellous work of power and mercy, whereby the Lord with a high hand and a mighty and outſtretched arm, a little after the diſcovery of the myſtery of iniquity, Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth, by the miniſtry of his ſervant Luther, and other worthy inſtruments whom he raiſed up for that effect, was graciouſly pleaſed, in the days of our fathers, to ranſom this land from the bondage of popiſh tyranny and ſuperſtition, and again to bleſs it with the light and liberty of the goſpel, which though it was oppoſed by the prince of this world, the ſpirit that wrought ſtrongly in the children of diſobedience, and did animate both the civil and eccleſiaſtic powers of the time, to reſiſt and oppoſe by fire and ſword; yet ſuch was the zeal of the Lord of hoſts in performing it, and ſo ſtrong was his hand upon a few poliſhed ſhafts, choſen and furniſhed by himſelf, that in a few years, not only was the reformed proteſtant religion eſtabliſhed by authority, and popery baniſhed the land, but moſt of congregations were planted with the miniſtry of the goſpel, and did yield ſubjection unto the ordinances of Jeſus Chriſt, and the diſcipline and government of the church were eſtabliſhed, according to the pattern ſhewed in the mount, in their beauty and ſtrength, in the due ſubordination of congregational elderſhips and preſbyteries and ſynods, excerciſing their reſpective powers unto edification, for bearing down the throne of iniquity, and advancing of the kingdom of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in knowledge, and holineſs, and righteouſneſs, unto the terror of the wicked and profane, and comfort and encouragement of the godly. In the thankful acknowledgement of which rare and ſingular mercies, and for ſtrengthening themſelves againſt adverſaries, both of church and ſtate, the national covenant being firſt ſubſcribed by the king and his houſhold, in the year 1580, was thereafter ſubſcribed by perſons of all ranks, in the year 1581, by ordinance of the Lords of ſecret Council, and acts of the General Aſſembly, and again by all ſorts of perſons, in the year 1590, by a new ordinance of council at the deſire of the General Aſſembly. This covenant relating unto the reformed religion then profeſſed in Scotland, and more particularly expreſſed in the large Confeſſion of Faith, eſtabliſhed and publicly confirmed by ſundry acts of parliament; as it was then entered into with much chearfulneſs and gladneſs of heart, the whole land rejoicing at the oath of God; ſo was it attended with many and choice bleſ-

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ſings from the Lord: Then was the church of Scotland for doctrine ſound and lively; for worſhip, pure and ſpiritual; for diſcipline, powerful and impartial; and for government, and unity, and order, beautiful and comely, and well compact together, which as they were attended with rich breathings, and comfortable influences of the Lord's Spirit upon the ſouls of his people at home, ſo were they the matter of this church's commendation in the churches abroad, who becauſe of theſe, gave her the teſtimony of one of the pureſt and brighteſt ſhining candleſticks amongſt the churches of Chriſt: but it was not long ere this beauty was marred, and this glory eclipſed, whilſt King James following too much the counſels of fleſh and blood, and being upon the one hand wroth with the freedom and faithfulneſs of miniſters, and upon the other hand, deſirous to gratify the prelatical party in England, by reducing the kirk of Scotland, in its worſhip and government, unto a conformity with the church of England; did, with the unlucky help and miſchievous induſtry of ſome ambitious and covetous men-pleaſing church-men, in a few years, by politic devices, firſt overthrow the government of the church by preſbyteries and ſynods, and obtrude inſtead thereof, a lordly government in the perſons of thirteen prelates, and then corrupt the purity of worſhip, by thruſting upon the church the Engliſh popiſh ceremonies, and accordingly did his ſon and the prelates proceed to build, until at laſt the doctrine came to be mingled with Arminian and popiſh errors, and the worſhip to be turned over into the Engliſh ſervice-book, and the diſcipline and government into a book of prelatical and popiſh canons; which courſe of defection having now continued and increaſed for the ſpace of near forty years without interruption, and being backed with the authority both civil and eccleſiaſtic, had no doubt terminated and reſolved in popery, if the Lord, when it was leaſt expected by friends, and leaſt feared by enemies, had not in a ſtrange and wonderful way cut aſunder the cords of theſe plowers, who plowed upon the back of his poor church, and revived his work and people.

And therefore we hold it our duty, in the third place, to make honourable mention of the work of the Lord which he hath done in our days, *to wit*, That in the year 1637, when the prelates were in the height of their power and pride, and had deviſed and procured that the ſervice-book and the book of canons ſhould be obtruded upon this church, and that there was

was no probable means, and very few inſtruments by which theſe corruptions of the worſhip and government of the houſe of God ſhould be reſiſted; the civil authority being ſtrongly engaged for carrying on thereof, and the greateſt part of the miniſtry being carried away with the courſe of conformity, and couching with Iſſachar under the burden. It pleaſed God, firſt, to ſtir up the ſpirits of a few of his ſervants and people to witneſs againſt theſe things, and ſo to encourage and countenance them in their proceedings, that in the month of February, in the year 1638, they did, notwithſtanding all the threats and oppoſition of adverſaries, which were many and ſtrong, again to revive and renew the national covenant, which now had been forgotten and buried in oblivion for the ſpace of almoſt forty years; and ſuch the good hand of God upon his work and people, that within not many months thereafter, almoſt the whole land did ſubject themſelves unto the oath of God; which was attended with more than ordinary manifeſtations of his preſence, and influences of his Spirit in the aſſemblies of his people, and was in effect to this church, which had in a great meaſure, and for a long time forſaken her firſt love, and declined from her primitive purity and integrity, as life from the dead: Neither did the Lord ceaſe to repair the ruin, and build up the breach that had been formerly made upon her, until he had reſtored her unto her liberty and beauty, in preſbyteries and ſynods, and general aſſemblies, conſtituted of miniſters and elders, according to the rule of Chriſt, and exerciſing their power unto edification. The firſt of theſe aſſemblies, which toward the end of the year 1638, convened at Glaſgow, the very place where the top-ſtone was put upon prelacy, in the year 1610, did revive and approve the regiſters of the former free and lawful general aſſemblies, ſince reformation from popery, in the year 1560; did condemn and annul ſix pretended and corrupt aſſemblies that had changed the government, and corrupted the worſhip; did take away the unlawful oaths of intrants to the miniſtry, caſt out the ſervice-book, book of canons, book of ordination, and the high commiſſion; did depoſe and excommunicate the prelates, did declare prelacy to have been abjured by the Confeſſion of Faith 1580, and to be removed out of this kirk, and Five Articles of Perth to have been abjured and removed by the ſame Confeſſion, and did reſtore kirk-ſeſſions, preſbyteries, provincial and national aſſemblies unto their full integrity in their members, privileges, liberties,

ties, powers, and juriſdictions, as they are conſtituted by the book of policy, regiſtrated in the books of the aſſembly 1580, and ordained to be ſubſcribed 1590, 1591, and make ſundry other laudable acts and conſtitutions, tending to the purging of the church, and advancement and ſettlement of the work of reformation. And though this aſſembly, and the determinations thereof, were afterwards much oppoſed by the popiſh, prelatical, and malignant party; yet did the Lord ſo countenance his ſervants and people in this land, and his work in their hands, that the reformation was fully eſtabliſhed, and at laſt ratified and confirmed both by king and parliament, in the year 1641. Then was there a ſweet combination of truth and peace in the land, and the Lord did in a good meaſure pour his Spirit from on high, by which the wilderneſs was turned into fruitful fields, and the fruitful field into a foreſt; in contemplation of which wonderful mercies and bleſſings of God, that they might teſtify their thankfulneſs for the ſame, and ſecure them ſo far as did lie in them unto their poſterity, and lend a helping hand unto their brethren in England, who then were wreſtling in the fire againſt the unjuſt violence and cruelty of the popiſh, prelatical, and malignant party; who by their evil counſels, had ſtirred up the king, firſt to forſake, and afterwards to make war againſt the parliament then looking at reformation: This church and nation did, in the year 1643, upon the parliament of England's calling for their help againſt the common enemy, propound unto them, that there might be a ſolemn covenant entered into by all the three nations, of Scotland, England, and Ireland, which being agreed upon, was accordingly proſecuted and carried on in all the three nations.

Therefo , as we do from our ſouls bleſs the Lord, who did put ſuch a thing into the hearts of his people, to engage themſelves in a covenant to his holy and bleſſed Majeſty, and one to another in ſubordination to him, in order to theſe things that concern truth, and holineſs, and righteouſneſs; ſo we do hold ourſelves bound to teſtify our cordial approbation of, and real adherence unto that memorable and never to be forgotten ſolemn league and covenant of England, Scotland, and Ireland; being perſuaded in our minds, and convinced in our conſciences, that it is a duty for people and nations, who profeſs the name of the Lord, to enter in covenant with him; this being indeed the firſt and great commandment of the law, that we ſhould have no other gods be-

fore him, and that we ſhould avouch the Lord to be our God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken to his voice, Exod. xx. 2, 3. Deut. xxvi. 16, 17, 18, 19. and that whereof we have many memorable and praiſe-worthy precedents in the book of God, eſpecially when a people were called to repent and turn unto God after public backſliding and defection, or were ſeeking a right way for eſtabliſhing of themſelves in the midſt of ſnares, or of engaging of the Lord to help them in ſtraits, and ſtrengthen them unto great and eminent undertakings, or to expreſs their thankfulneſs for great and wonderful mercies and deliverances, Deut. xxix. 1, 2. 2 Chron. xv. 12, 13, 14, 15. and xxix. 10. and xxxiv. 31, 32. Neh. ix. 39. and x. 29, *&c.* And being no leſs perſuaded in our minds, and convinced in our conſciences, that our ſolemn league and covenant, in the year 1643, is for the matter juſt and warrantable, for the ends neceſſary and commendable, for the time ſeaſonable, and for the parties honourable; the matter and ends are all theſe precious things that are involved in pure religion, true liberty, and a well grounded uniformity in the former, and union and peace in the latter; or (to ſpeak it in the words of a reverend divine) this oath is ſuch, and in the matter and conſequence of it of ſuch concernment, as we can truly ſay, it is worthy of us; yea, of all theſe kingdoms, yea, of all the kingdoms of the world; for it is ſwearing fealty and allegiance unto Chriſt the King of kings, and a giving up of all theſe kingdoms, which are his inheritance, to be ſubdued more to his throne, and ruled more by his ſceptre, upon whoſe ſhoulders the government is laid, and in the exerciſe of whoſe government and peace there ſhall be no end. The parties are the true God, the living God, the everlaſting King, glorious in holineſs, fearful in praiſes, and doing wonders; and the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland; who though as all the nations, in compariſon of him, are but as the drop of a bucket, and vanity, and leſs than vanity and nothing; yet ſuch as through his grace were amongſt the firſt fruits of the Gentiles, and are for the knowledge and acknowledgement of Jeſus Chriſt, in name and fame, parallel unto if not beyond any kingdoms of the world. The ſeaſon was the deplorable eſtate of the church and kingdom of Ireland; the diſtreſſed eſtate of the church and kingdom of England; and the dangerous eſtate of the church and kingdom of Scotland, that we may truly ſay,

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(with the reverend divine already mentioned) ſuch an oath, for matter, perſons and other circumſtances, the like hath not been in any age or oath we read of in ſacred or human ſtories, yet ſufficiently warranted in both. This ſolemn league and covenant, as it was actually ſworn, and taken by the whole body of Scotland, from the higheſt to the loweſt, ſo alſo by the honourable houſes of the parliament of England, the aſſembly of divines, the renowned city of London, and multitudes, not only of the people, but of perſons of eminent rank and quality throughout that nation, and the nation of Ireland, and all this by the authority and perſuaſion of the powers civil and eccleſiaſtic; who can have forgotten how deliberately it was reſolved? how unanimouſly it was concluded? how joyfully it was received and entertained? The reſpective authorities of church and ſtate in Scotland, did all with one voice approve and embrace the ſame, as the moſt powerful mean, by the bleſſing of God, for ſettling and preſerving the true proteſtant religion with perfect peace in theſe nations, and propagating the ſame to other nations; and after taking of the ſame themſelves, did ordain it alſo to be with public humiliation, and all religious ſolemnities, received, ſworn and ſubſcribed by all miniſters and profeſſors within this kirk, and ſubjects within this kingdom; which was accordingly done by the whole body of the land, and in many perſons and congregations attended with the feelings of that joy, and comfortable influences of the Spirit of God in the enlargements and meltings of hearts, which they did find in ſo great meaſure upon the renovation of the national covenant, in the year 1638. And this ſolemn oath of God being already taken by the honourable houſes of the parliament of England, by the renowned city of London, and by the reverend aſſembly of divines, the lords and commons in parliament, upon the account of its being thought a fit and excellent means to acquire the favour of Almighty God towards the three kingdoms, of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and likewiſe to unite them, and by uniting, to ſtrengthen and fortify them againſt the common enemy, and the true reformed religion, peace and proſperity of theſe kingdoms; did order and ordain, That the ſame covenant be ſolemnly taken throughout the kingdom of England, and dominion of Wales, and did condeſcend upon directions and inſtructions for the better and more orderly taking thereof by all the officers and ſoldiers, by the counties and committees, by the univerſities,

by the miniſters and pariſhes then under the power of the parliament: And as by theſe inſtructions, the declaration of both kingdoms joined in the armies for the vindication and defence of their religion, liberties and laws, againſt the popiſh, prelatical and malignant party, (in which ſuch as would not take the covenant, are declared to be public enemies to their religion and country, and that they are to be cenſured and puniſhed as profeſſed adverſaries and malignants) was appointed to be publicly read: So for the better encouragement of all ſorts of perſons to take the covenant, it was in the ſame inſtructions recommended to the aſſembly of divines, to make a brief declaration by way of exhortation to all ſorts of perſons to take it, as that which they judged not only lawful, but (all things conſidered) exceeding expedient and neceſſary, and to be a ſingular pledge of God's gracious goodneſs to all the three kingdoms. In obedience to which, the aſſembly did frame an exhortation, wherein they do not only hold forth the lawfulneſs of the covenant, and take off ſuch ſcruples and objections, as did then lie moſt in the way of the taking of it; but do alſo preſs it as the ſovereign and only means to recover an embroiled and bleeding remnant. And upon theſe grounds, and according to theſe preſcripts, was that ſolemn covenant taken by multitudes of perſons of all ſorts, many of which did rejoice at the oath of God, and did look upon it as a moſt promiſing branch of hope held forth by the Lord, for renewing and reviving the church of Chriſt in England, and Ireland, and preſerving the church of Scotland, and begetting and bringing forth great and honourable things amongſt the nations and churches abroad, for advancing the kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt, and bearing down the kingdom of antichriſt. Neither can it be forgotten, how by the ſame authority, it is appointed to be ſubſcribed by perſons of all ranks ſeverally, writing their names or their marks, to which their names are to be added in a parchment roll or a book, whereunto the covenant is to be inſerted, purpoſely to be provided for that end, and kept as a record in every pariſh; and how a little thereafter, it was afterwards ordered by the honourable houſe of commons, that the ſolemn league and covenant be on every day of faſt and public humiliation, publicly read in every church and congregation within the kingdom, and that every congregation be enjoined to have one of the ſaid covenants fairly printed in a fair letter, in a table fitted to hang up in ſome place of the church to be read; which things wanted

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not their due effect in many places: And why ſhould we not alſo mention the mighty power and loving kindneſs of the Lord, teſtifying from heaven in his works of providence, his approbation of what was done by his people in theſe things according to his word, who knows not how from that day and upward, the Lord went forth with his people and their armies, and that the enemy was not able to ſtand before them, but did fall under them until they were foiled and wholly broken to pieces. Theſe things we mention, to ſtir up and entertain in ourſelves and others, the honourable and due eſtimation of that honourable and ſacred bond of the covenant, thus well warranted by precepts and precedents from the word of the Lord, thus rationally and ſtrongly urged by the authorities in both nations, thus ſolemnly ſworn by ſo many thouſands, thus ſealed and atteſted in the conſciences of ſo many gracious ſouls, by lively communion and fellowſhip with God, in bringing themſelves under the bond thereof, and thus bleſſed and countenanced of God with ſuch outward deliverances and ſucceſſes; and to make it appear that it is not without cauſe that we judge the obligation thereof ſtill to be in force, and that we do witneſs and profeſs our adherence thereunto. For our parts, though we do not judge all the matters contained therein to be of the ſame importance and weight, ſome of them being religious, others civil only, nor all the articles thereof to be of the ſame nature, ſome of them being abſolute and binding abſolutely, others being conditional and binding conditionally only: Yet we do judge ourſelves, and the parties engaged therein, and who have taken it, to be ſtill firmly bound to endeavour, according to our and their places, the performance of the ſeveral things therein contained and ſworn, according to the common and plain ſenſe of the words and nature of the obligation therein expreſſed, and that no perſon or power upon earth can diſpenſe or abſolve either themſelves or others from the bond and tie of the ſacred oath of the moſt high God.

In the firſt place, We do teſtify for, and bear record unto ſo much of the work of uniformity in religion, as was attained by the reverend aſſembly of divines at London, and the commiſſioners of the kirk of Scotland, in one confeſſion of faith, form of church government, directory of worſhip, and catechiſing, and ratified and approved by the general aſſemblies of this church, and parliaments of this kingdom, in ſo far as did concern them, judging the ſame to be ſound and agreeable

agreeable to the rule of the word of God, and to be in ſo far the reſult of one of theſe great duties whereunto we are obliged by covenant, *viz.* To endeavour to bring the churches of God in theſe three kingdoms, to the neareſt conjunction and uniformity in religion, confeſſion of faith, form of church government, directory for worſhip, and catechiſing, that we and our poſterity after us, may as brethren live in faith and love, and the Lord may delight to dwell in the midſt of us; and being followed and practiſed, to be ſuch as would ſingularly contribute for the honour and glory of God, and the edifying of the churches of Chriſt in theſe nations, in the knowledge and belief of the truth, purity of worſhip, ſtrength of diſcipline, unity of affection, and power of godlineſs, and to the taking away and ſuppreſſing all things that are contrary thereunto.

Having now borne teſtimony for, and profeſſed our adherence unto the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government of the kirk of Scotland, and to ſo much of the work of uniformity as was attained with England, and to the national covenant of Scotland, and to the ſolemn league and covenant of Scotland, England, and Ireland, we hold it our duty, in the next place, upon the grounds, and for the ends already ſet down, as to profeſs our adherence to the teſtimonies formerly given by ourſelves and others of the Lord's miniſters and people, of the proteſting judgment in this land, ſince the month of September, in the year 1651, concerning the actings of the preſent powers againſt this nation and church: ſo alſo at this time, to bear witneſs againſt the things now on foot in theſe nations, that are contrary and deſtructive unto the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, uniformity and covenants already mentioned. And therefore,

1. We do profeſs our abhorrence of the remnant and root of that popiſh, prelatical, and malignant ſpirit, which notwithſtanding of the Lord's witneſſing againſt it in a moſt eminent way, now for near twenty years in theſe nations, both by his word and works; yet doth not only lodge and lurk in thouſands, but breaks forth in many, unto the oppoſing of godlineſs, and the work of reformation, and in taking hold of every ſhadow of opportunity that ſeemeth to contribute for reviving and promoting the old malignant intereſt and deſigns, againſt religion and liberty: And we cannot but bemoan that that ſpirit, in the actings thereof, as it ſtandeth in oppoſition to godlineſs and the precious truths and ordi-

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nances of Jeſus Chriſt, is too much connived at, by which it cometh to paſs that popery grows and ſpreads, and that malignant men caſt off the yoke of diſcipline, and ſet up paſtors according to their own heart, and bear down the godly, and the work of God in many places; yea, we cannot but bemoan that many ſuch, through their feigned forwardneſs and counterfeit zeal to promote the intereſts of church and ſtate, have ſcrewed themſelves into places of power and truſt in both, and labour to infuſe but too much of that ſpirit into the very vitals of government, deſigning, no doubt, to do by fraud what they have not been able to do by force, by making us do, as Amaziah king of Judah did, (who after he had overcome the Edomites, did bow down and worſhip their gods, 2 Chron. xxv. 14.) unto the involving of the land again in ſinful compliances with the malignant party, contrary to the ſolemn public confeſſion of ſins and engagement unto duties, in the year 1648; to which ſolemn confeſſion of ſins and engagements unto duties, we do alſo judge ourſelves bound to bear teſtimony, and to profeſs our adherence thereunto.

2. We do diſclaim and teſtify againſt all that huge ſwarm of errors, and hereſies, and blaſphemies that have been broached, and have broken out in theſe nations in our days; whether ſuch as deny and oppugn the divine authority of the holy ſcriptures, or the ſacred Trinity of perſons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, in the bleſſed unity of eſſence and being, one infinite, eternal and almighty God; the Deity of the Son of God; the Deity of the Holy Ghoſt; God's holy and eternal decrees of election and reprobation; the creation of the world; the being of good and evil angels; original ſin; the immortality of the ſoul; the reſurrection of the body; the day of judgment; eternal life and death; the two natures of Jeſus Chriſt, and the union thereof in one perſon; the real merit and ſatisfying virtue of his death and paſſion to take away ſin and wrath, and redeeming of ſouls from the guilt and bondage thereof, and theſe only who are given to him of the Father, and not all and every individual man; or the impotency and deadneſs of man's will to all ſpiritual and ſupernatural good; or the true nature of faith; or juſtification by the free grace of God through the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt taken hold of by faith; or the uſe of the moral law to believers; the inbeing of ſin and of a body of death in believers; or their confeſſing and acknowledging of ſin, and praying unto God for pardon thereof; or their being chaſtiſed

tiſed of God for their ſins; or the ordinances of Chriſt as ſuperfluous and not neceſſary to a ſaint; or the morality of the Lord's day; or the baptizing of infants born within the church; or the lawfulneſs of oaths; or degrees prohibited in marriage, Lev. xviii. the government of the houſe of God by preſbyteries and ſynods; and whatſoever is contrary to the law and to the teſtimony, under whatſoever names or forms; whether Atheiſm, Antiſcripturiſm, Arianiſm, Scepticiſm, Socinianiſm, Popery, Pelagianiſm, Familiſm, Arminianiſm, Antinomianiſm, Libertiniſm, Anabaptiſm, Eraſtianiſm, Prelacy, Separatiſm, Independency; and whatſoever elſe that is condemned by the word of God, that hath been publiſhed in theſe nations theſe years paſt, or is on foot therein at this day, the particulars whereof being ſo many and various, would be tedious and irkſome to enumerate: Yea, as we do diſclaim and teſtify againſt all of theſe, ſo we judge that many of theſe are for their groſſneſs to be abhorred, and do wiſh that they could for ever be buried in immortal oblivion, never to be mentioned nor heard of any more in the churches of God; but when they are vented, and many of them countenanced and encouraged, unto the provoking of the God of truth in a high meaſure; to the affronting and treading under-foot his precious truth and ordinances; to the ſubverting and deſtroying of many ſouls; to the reproach of the churches of Chriſt at home, and ſcandalizing of theſe that are abroad; to the grief of the godly, and inſulting and mocking of the profane; to the amazement of friends, and joy and rejoicing of adverſaries, who can hold his peace? Nay, we are afraid that God will, in ſome eminent way, declare his wrath from heaven againſt theſe lands, becauſe of that curſed monſtrous brood of errors, hereſies, and blaſphemies that hath been hatched and bred up therein theſe years paſt, and alas, with too little contradiction; would to God not too much connivance and countenance from theſe who might have done much for cruſhing that cockatrice in the ſhell.

3. As we do profeſs our diſſatisfaction that the civil powers ſhould take upon them by themſelves, ordinarily to preſcribe public humiliation and thankſgiving, with the cauſes and diets thereof, to all the miniſters and members of this church, as being contrary to the well warranted privileges and conſtant practice of the church itſelf, and in its own nature introductory to greater encroachments, and putting into the hands

hands of the civil power, the modelling of the public worſhip of God, and things moſt properly eccleſiaſtic; ſo we deſire with that ſobriety that becomes Chriſtians, and that faithfulneſs and zeal that becomes the miniſters of the goſpel, to bear witneſs againſt theſe injuries that are done to the true reformed proteſtant religion, profeſſed in this church, and held forth in our Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, and Directories for worſhip and government; by that late petition of advice offered by the late parliament at Weſtminſter to his late Highneſs, and conſented unto by him in the article concerning religion, and now homologated by the eſtabliſhment made of that government in the perſon of his ſon according thereto. 1. Becauſe that article, though it do provide that the true proteſtant religion, as it is contained in the holy ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, be held forth and aſſerted for the public profeſſion of theſe nations; yet by preſcinding from all our former Confeſſions of Faith, and attainments in the work of reformation, and by providing that a Confeſſion of Faith yet to be agreed upon by his Highneſs and the parliament, according to the rule and warrant of the ſcriptures, be aſſerted, held forth and recommended to the people of theſe nations, it doth wave and caſt looſe all theſe former attainments and Confeſſions of Faith from being the *teſſera* of our public profeſſion, and import a very great reflexion upon the religion which, ſince the reformation from popery, hath been profeſſed amongſt us, and giveth no ſmall ſcandal to the churches of God at home and abroad, and no ſmall advantage to papiſts and other adverſaries, by miniſtering unto them but too juſt occaſion to think and ſay, that after a hundred years profeſſing of the proteſtant religion, we have it and the Confeſſion of our Faith thereanent yet to ſeek, and to be determined upon; yea, it leaveth it doubtful, what is or may be underſtood by the proteſtant religion mentioned in the article; whether that called Calviniſm, or Lutheraniſm, or Arminianiſm, or any other that layeth claim to the name of the proteſtant, or ſome complex of all or more of theſe, or the things wherein all of them do agree, laying aſide the things wherein they differ. 2. Becauſe the determinations concerning religion made in that article, though reaching to Scotland, no leſs than to England and Ireland, were enacted and eſtabliſhed in a law, not only without the previous determination of a ſynod or aſſembly of this church, but alſo without ſo much as advice taken or conſultation had with

any of her ſynods and aſſemblies; yea, whilſt ſome of her miniſters were earneſtly deſiring and preſſing the contrary, and that any civil power ſhould at the firſt inſtant, eſpecially in a church conſtituted, whoſe eſtabliſhed doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government, they are bound not only by the common tie of the magiſtrate's duty, but alſo by the particular oath of God, to preſerve inviolable, take upon them of, and by themſelves, to determine things of ſo intimate and important concernment to religion; yea, take upon them, to caſt looſe their former good and praiſe-worthy ſettlements, and to determine the public confeſſion of that church and nation, (as is hinted in that petition of advice) we conceive to be contrary to the word of God, which hath put into the hands of the officers of his own houſe (and not into the hands of the powers of the world) the keys of his own houſe, whether the key of knowledge, or doctrine, that conſiſts in expounding and preaching of the word, and determining controverſies of faith, according to the rule of the ſcriptures, or the key of order and decency, by which circumſtances of order and worſhip in the houſe of God are determined, according to the general rules of the word, concerning order and decency, or the key of diſcipline for exerciſing of church cenſures upon the ſcandalous and obſtinate, or the key of ordaining and ſending forth of church officers, for ſpiritual ſervices and miniſtrations in the houſe of God, Matth. xvi. 19. John xx. 23. Mal. ii. 7. Deut. xvii. 9, 10, 11. Lev. x. 10. Ezek. xxii. 26. and xxxiii. 23, 24, Rev. ii. 2, 14, 15. Acts xv. 6, &c. and xvi. 4. John xviii. 36. 2 Chron. xxvi. 16, &c. and to be contrary to the Confeſſion of the Faith and conſtant tenor of the doctrine of this church, and former good and laudable laws of the land, as will appear from the large Confeſſion of Faith in the head of councils, (to which alſo agreeth the confeſſion of Faith, firſt agreed upon by the aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter, *anno* 1646, in the head of ſynods and councils, and in the head concerning the civil magiſtrate) and the remonſtrances and declarations of the general aſſemblies of this church, particularly from the declaration of the general aſſembly, againſt the unlawful engagement in war againſt England, *anno* 1648, and from ſeveral acts of parliament, particularly from the firſt act of the twelfth parliament of King James, held at Edinburgh, June 5. 1592. yea, to be contrary to the Confeſſions of Faith and body of the doctrine of the proteſtant churches, which do generally

generally and harmoniouſly teach an eccleſiaſtic power in the officers of the houſe of God, diſtinct from, and independent upon the civil powers, to which belongeth the exerciſe and uſe of the keys of the kingdom of Chriſt: and therefore for the civil power to aſſume it, is to tranſgreſs the bounds, and to remove the land-marks which are ſet by God, againſt which the faithful men of God, who lived in this church in the days of our fathers, did witneſs in the midſt of difficulties and dangers. 3. We hold ourſelves bound to witneſs againſt that article, becauſe of the toleration of many errors and hereſies, and things that are contrary to ſound doctrine and the power of godlineſs that is therein framed and eſtabliſhed in a law, *viz.* Of all theſe that are conſiſtent with profeſſing faith in God the Father, and in Jeſus Chriſt his eternal Son, the true God, and in the holy Spirit, God coequal with the Father and the Son, one God bleſſed for ever, and with acknowledging the holy ſcriptures of the Old and New Teſtament to be the revealed will and word of God, whilſt the maintainers thereof abuſe not this liberty to the civil injury of others, or the diſturbance of the public peace; ſo that this liberty be not extended to popery or prelacy, or to the countenancing ſuch who publiſh horrible blaſphemies, or practiſe, or hold forth licentiouſneſs or profaneneſs under the profeſſion of Chriſt, and therefore not only unto Arminianiſm, Antinomianiſm, Anabaptiſm, Eraſtianiſm, Separatiſm, *&c.* but alſo to a great part of Familiſm, Socinianiſm, Quakeriſm, Pelagianiſm, and many errors that do not only deny and deſtroy many of the beautiful ſuperſtructures, but do alſo ſtrike at many of the corner ſtones, and chief foundations of Chriſtian religion: Such a toleration as this we conceive cannot be connived at, much leſs countenanced and allowed by maſters of families in their houſholds; by church officers in the churches of Chriſt; or by Chriſtian magiſtrates in Chriſtian ſtates and commonwealths, without palpable croſſing and contradicting the will of God revealed in the ſcriptures of truth, Gen. xviii. 19. and xxxv. 1, 2, 3, 4. 1 Sam. iii. 11, 12, 13, 14. Pſal. ci. 1. 1 Tim. ii. 3, 12. John x. 11. Tit. iii. 10, 11. Rev. ii. 6, 14, 15, 16, 20. Deut. xiii. 6, 11, *&c.* Joſh. xxii. 11. 1 Kings xviii. 40. 2 Chron. xv. 16, 17. 1 Kings xii. 26. 2 Kings xvii. 18. Ezek. xxiii. 45, 49. Amos v. 13. Zech. xiii. 3. Therefore have the commiſſioners of the general aſſembly of this church witneſſed plainly and fully againſt this toleration, whilſt it was but yet in the bud, *anno* 1649.

And the reverend aſſembly of divines at Weſtminſter, as they have in the Larger Catechiſm, in the expoſition of the ſecond commandment, reckoned the tolerating of falſe religions amongſt the ſins forbidden therein; ſo in the Confeſſion of Faith, they do aſſert it to be the duty of the magiſtrate to take order that the truth of God be kept pure and entire; that all blaſphemies and hereſies be ſuppreſſed; all corruptions and abuſes in worſhip and diſcipline prevented or reformed; and all the ordinances of God duly ſettled, adminiſtered and obſerved: and it is a covering will be found not of the Lord's Spirit, to ſay, that theſe commandments and precedents, and threatenings from the word of God, do not concern the magiſtrate in the days of the goſpel, not only becauſe the ends and reaſons thereof, *viz.* The glory of God, and the preſervation of the image of God, which conſiſts in holineſs and righteouſneſs amongſt the children of men, are moral and perpetual; but alſo becauſe as the Lord hath propheſied and promiſed of the Chriſtian magiſtrate in the days of the goſpel, that he ſhall not defile the place of the Lord's throne, and the place of the ſoles of his feet where he will dwell in the midſt of his people, in their ſetting up of their threſholds by his threſholds, and their poſts by his poſts, Ezek. xliii. 7, 8. and that they ſhall thruſt through the falſe prophets, Zech. xiii. 3. So hath the Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords, ſhown them an example, by making a ſcourge of cords, and driving buyers and ſellers out of the temple, which was the only act of compulſive and external power that we read of him, to have exerciſed in all his life, that he might therein give an example of that zeal for the houſe of God, which ought to poſſeſs all theſe againſt the profaners of his temple, and polluters of his church, to whom God hath given a coactive power over the outward man: And the apoſtle Paul, Rom. xiii. in laying down the magiſtrate's duty, hath inſtructed us, that he beareth the ſword to be a terror to evil works; we mean, ſuch as appearing in the outward man, do mar the glory of God and the good of men, and are ſubject to cognizance and trial by men, of which ſort are many errors, and hereſies, and blaſphemies, 2 Phil. 2. 2 John 10. 2 Tim. iii. 13. Tit. iii. 10. Rom. xvi. 17. And is it not propheſied in the book of the Revelation, *That the kingdoms of the world ſhall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Chriſt;* and that the ten horns *ſhall hate the whore, and make her deſolate*

and

and naked, and ſhall eat her fleſh and burn her with fire, Rev. xi. 15. and xvii. 16. Yea, is not the preſent powers, their taking upon them to reſtrain popery and prelacy, an undeniable acknowledgement that the civil magiſtrate hath power given of God ſo to do? and if in theſe things, why not in other things that are no leſs prejudicial to the glory of God, and ſpiritual good of men? 2. Becauſe ſuch a toleration is utterly repugnant unto, and inconſiſtent with the indiſpenſible oath of God in the ſolemn league and covenant, profeſſed to be made in the preſence of Almighty God the ſearcher of all hearts, with a true intent to perform the ſame, as we ſhall anſwer at that great day, when the ſecrets of all hearts ſhall be diſcloſed. Is this toleration the performing of theſe vows of God upon us? Or is it not the way to caſt looſe the reformed religion in Scotland; to hinder reformation in England; to mar uniformity in one Confeſſion of Faith, Directory of Worſhip, Catechiſm, and form of church government? And ſhall we hereby extirpate ſuperſtition, hereſy, ſchiſm, profaneneſs, and whatſoever ſhall be found contrary to ſound doctrine and to the power of godlineſs? Or is it not the way to nurſe them upon our breaſts, and dandle them upon our knees? Is this to free our ſouls from the guilt of other mens ſins? Or is it not to ſuffer ſin upon them, yea, to partake with them therein, and ſo partake of their plagues? Is this to make the Lord one and his name one in the three kingdoms? Or is it not rather to multiply our gods according to the number of our cities? 3. Becauſe this toleration, by the countenance which it hath had in this nation theſe ſeven years paſt, hath already produced many ſad and ſinful effects, ſuch as the growth and increaſe of popery; the ſpreading of Libertiniſm, Quakeriſm, Anabaptiſm, and the profaning of the Lord's day, and deſpiſing of the ordinances and public aſſemblies of the Lord's people; the contempt and caſting looſe of church diſcipline; the cauſeleſs and unjuſt revolt of men of a malignant ſpirit from their own lawful paſtors and church officers, and ſundry ſuch like, that are deſtructive unto piety and godlineſs, and to unity and order. And if God ſhall not be graciouſly pleaſed, by a wonderful work of power and mercy to prevent it, what can be expected, when it is now framed into a law, and all laws to the contrary repealed and taken away, but that it ſhould prove the inlet to all ſort of error, and diſtraction and confuſion? Who knows not how fertile the ſpirit of man is of vain imaginations, and how

prone

prone to change the truth of God into a lie, that hardly can all theſe bounds that are ſet unto it, and theſe bands that are put upon it by the Lord, when improven by men to the utmoſt diligence and care kept from debording into error and looſeneſs, ſhall it not then overflow all its banks when it may do it without contradiction; yea, in many things expect countenance and protection therein? Our hearts tremble to think how the glory of God ſhall be trodden under-foot; how the precious truths of the goſpel ſhall be corrupted and perverted; how the ordinances of Chriſt ſhall be contemned and ſet at nought; how his government ſhall be overthrown; his officers had in contempt; his worſhip polluted; his day profaned; how peoples minds ſhall be troubled, and ſouls ſubverted; how the power of godlineſs ſhall be eaten up with vain janglings; how the whole work of reformation ſhall not only be retarded and obſtructed, but in a great meaſure (if not utterly) rendered void; how, inſtead of reformation we ſhall have deformation; inſtead of the power of godlineſs, vain jangling; inſtead of love, bitter heart-burnings and jealouſies; inſtead of union, ſchiſm and diviſion; inſtead of peace, contention and ſtrife; inſtead of order and government, anarchy and confuſion; yea, what elſe can be the fruits that ſuch an evil tree can bring forth, or the ſtreams that can iſſue from ſo bitter and impure a fountain, but that at laſt our candleſtick ſhould be removed, and our ſun ſet in a ſad night of obſcure darkneſs? It is above all contradiction, that as the ſee of Rome, theſe hundred years paſt, hath always had an eye upon Britain, for reducing the churches of Chriſt therein unto their former ſubjection unto the man of ſin, ſo hath not her hopes been more heightened by any thing, than by this toleration; becauſe thereby advantage is miniſtered for ſending forth her emiſſaries, for crying down a miniſtry and ordinances, and perverting of the precious truths of God, and inſtilling into peoples minds the ſeeds of the popiſh doctrine, which maketh many wiſe men fear that theſe nations ſhall again, at laſt, be carried back again into Rome, and be ſwallowed in popiſh ſuperſtition and idolatry.

Next, as we do profeſs the ſorrow of our hearts, ſo we do teſtify the abhorrence of our ſouls, againſt all the injuries and affronts that have been or are offered and done to the national covenant of Scotland, and to the ſolemn league and covenant of England, Scotland, and Ireland. It is too much ſin upon theſe nations (whereof we acknowledge ourſelves to

have

have a large ſhare) that they have not attended the duties to which they are reſpectively engaged therein, with that ſincerity, reality and conſtancy that beſeems ſo ſacred and ſolemn vows made unto God, but have, through the power of an unſound and luke-warm heart, and an unſtable ſpirit, come ſhort exceedingly therein; yea, have fallen in many breaches of all the articles thereof. But what a dreadful aſtoniſhing thing is it, the like whereof we believe hath ſcarce been heard amongſt the heathen, that theſe ſolemn vows and covenants (which for the ſolemnity, hath had but few parallels among the nations) ſhould not only be ſcorned and derided by open adverſaries, but vilified, reproached, oppoſed and trodden under-foot by many who have therein opened their mouths unto God, and ſubſcribed and ſealed them with their hands; yea, ſought to be buried in oblivion, that the name thereof as to the obligation of them, may be no more mentioned nor remembered. We cannot remember nor repeat but with much indignation and abhorrency of ſpirit, how ſome have railed upon, and reviled it, to that height of impudence and impiety, as to call it Nehuſtane, the brazen ſerpent that ſhould be broken to pieces, and ground to powder, leſt men fall down to worſhip it, and to compare the preſſing of it to the papiſts holding up the idolatrous euchariſt in the eyes of the people, that they may fall down and worſhip it; and how others of no better ſpirit have been bold to call it a device of the devil, a curſed covenant hatched in hell: And which doth more afflict us, as being a more public ſin upon theſe nations, not only is there no law nor declaration, ſince the year 1651, declaring the ſtanding obligation thereof, and former laws and declarations relating thereunto to be ſtill in force, but the very formal tie and obligation thereof is forgotten and laid aſide; and all laws, ſtatutes and ordinances, and clauſes in any law, ſtatute and ordinance, relating to the tie and eſtabliſhment thereof, repealed, ſo far as they are contrary to the liberty and toleration in things religious, held forth in the petition of advice. Oh that we were ſenſible of the diſhonour that is done to God in theſe things, and of the dreadful guilt that theſe nations are involved into thereby, and of the great wrath that is like to come thereupon becauſe of the ſame. If covenant breaking be a moſt hainous and dangerous offence complained of, condemned, threatened, and ſeverely plagued of God, Pſal. lxxviii. 34, 35, 36, 37. Jer. xi. 10. 2 Kings xvii. 15. Lev. xxvi. 25. Deut. xxix. 20,

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21, 22, 23; 24. Jer. xxii. 8, 9. Ezek. xvii. 15. Amos i. 9. Joſh. vii. 11, 12. 2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2. If it be true which was delivered from the word of the Lord by a reverend divine, in his exhortation made to the honourable houſe of commons, and reverend divines of the aſſembly at London, before he read the covenant, that a truce-breaker is reckoned up amongſt the vileſt of Chriſtians, 2 Tim. iii. 3. So a covenant-breaker is liſted amongſt the worſt of heathens, Rom. i. 31. And which from the ſame word of truth was delivered by another reverend divine, at the taking of the covenant, by the honourable committee of eſtates, and reverend commiſſioners of the general aſſembly in Scotland, *That God would ſhake out every man from his houſe, and from his labour, that performed not the words of this promiſe*, Neh .v. 13. If (we ſay) theſe be the true ſayings of God, as no doubt they are, becauſe delivered by the God of truth, in the ſcriptures of truth, have we not reaſon upon the hearing thereof, to be afraid, that great is the wrath of the Lord that is kindled againſt the inhabitants of theſe nations, becauſe of forſaking and deſpiſing of his covenant; and upon that account, not only to mourn and humble ourſelves in private, but alſo to give public warning thereof unto others, that (if the Lord ſo will) we may perſuade them alſo to humble themſelves, and repent; or if they will not hearken and hear, that we may deliver our own ſouls, by bearing witneſs to God and his truth, and by not hating our brother in our heart, but in any wiſe rebuking our neighbour, and not ſuffering ſin upon him, Lev. xix. 17.

In the laſt place, we do alſo, as miniſters of the goſpel, teſtify our diſlike, that the civil powers, who now bear rule over this nation, ſhould engroſs into their treaſury, the legal ſettled maintenance of all the vacant churches into the land, and put the diſpoſing thereof into the hands of a civil judicatory, without whoſe interventing approbation and warrant (notwithſtanding of their being called by the congregation, and approven and admitted by the preſbytery) none ſhall be authorized or admitted to any ſuch vacant living or benefice, as is due to the miniſtry in Scotland, and that they do not allow them this approbation and warrant, until firſt they do declare under their hands, their purpoſe and reſolution to live peaceably under the preſent government. 1. Becauſe this way is contrary unto the word of God. The divine right of the maintenance of miniſters is a truth that is clearly taught in the ſcriptures, both of the Old and New Teſtament, Numb.

xviii.

xviii. 8, 9. Deut. xiv. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29. Ezek. xlv. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Matth. x. 10. Luke x. 7. 1 Cor. ix. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Gal. vi. 6. 1 Tim. v. 17. And the ſcriptures alſo teach, that as it is the magiſtrate's duty to ſee ſufficient proviſion made for the miniſtry, and (if need be) to ſupply their want out of their own treaſury, Iſa. xlix. 23. and lx. 10. 1 Chron. xxix. 1, 2, 3, 4. 2 Chron xxxi. 2, 3, 4, &c. Neh. xiii. 10, 11, 12, 13. Gen. xlvii. 22. So alſo that is a great ſin before the Lord for them, or any other, to take away or devour, or intervert holy things that are now already ſettled and devoted unto the maintenance of the goſpel, and of the worſhip of God, Lev. xxvii. 10, 32, 33. Deut. xxvi. 12, 13, 14, 15. Prov. xx. 25. 2 Kings xvi. 17. 2 Chron. xxv. 24. Joel iii. 4, 5. Mal. iii. 8, 9. Acts xix. 37. Rom. ii. 22. Add to theſe things, that the church of Scotland hath a proper patrimony and rents of her own, competent for the entertaining of her miniſters, founded for moſt part upon the tithes and allocations out of the ſame, and upon particular donations and mortifications of private and public benefactors. 2. That there is no footſtep in the word of God of the civil magiſtrate his approbation of a miniſter in the houſe of God, as neceſſary, before he have right unto, or power to intromit with his maintenance, or of the civil magiſtrate his being warranted to put a bar upon the legal maintenance of the miniſters of the goſpel, that is due unto them by virtue of their office, or to reſtrain it, until firſt they have given bonds for their peaceable deportment under his government; but that upon the contrary, the word of the Lord doth clearly teach, that miniſters maintenance is due by virtue of their office, and without any ſuch interven.ing approbation from the civil magiſtrate, or any ſuch bonds required of them, or given by them: The Holy Ghoſt, Lev. vii. 35, 36. calleth the maintenance of the prieſts, the portion of their anointing, in the day when he preſented them to miniſter unto the Lord in the prieſt's office, which the Lord commanded to be given them of the children of Iſrael, in the day when he anointed them, by a ſtatute for ever, throughout their generations, which is repeated again, Numb. xviii. 18. Their maintenance is in many texts of ſcripture, called their inheritance, which they were as freely to enjoy, as the people did enjoy their inheritances. The light of nature taught a heathen king to allow heathen prieſts ſomewhat more in the freedom of their enjoyments, than to the reſt of his ſubjects, Gen. xlvii. 22. and

the part of Levi's covenant of miniſters, having acceſs to their maintenance freely by virtue of their office, is of force under the goſpel, as well as under the law, as we may ſee from the xlvth chapter of the prophecy of Ezekiel: It is there appointed that an holy portion of the land be aſſigned for the prieſts, the miniſters of the ſanctuary, and given unto them immediately by the aſſignment and commandment of God, without ſuch interventing approbation of any civil authority, or any ſuch promiſes required of them, or made by them, as previous unto their right thereunto. And the ſame thing is alſo clearly conſequent from theſe texts in the New Teſtament which we have cited already, that do prove the maintenance of miniſters under the goſpel, to be due unto them, *jure divino*, and by virtue of their office. 3. This way of aſſuming and diſpoſing of the maintenance of the miniſters of the goſpel, is contrary unto the liberties, and privileges, and conſtitutions of this church, founded upon the word of God, and confirmed by a conſtant current of many wholeſome laws and acts of parliament, made in favours of the church. 1*ſt* Book of Diſcipline, head fifth and ſixth. 2*d* Book of Diſcipline, chap. ix, x, xii. Act of the General Aſſembly at Edinburgh, Dec. 25. 1566. Articles touching reformation condeſcended upon in the Aſſembly at Edinburgh, July 21. 1567. Act of the Aſſembly at Edinburgh, April 24. 1576. Act of Parliament at Edinburgh, Oct. 24. 1581. Act of Parliament at Edinburgh, Jan. 1. 1592. As alſo, the *6th*, *7th*, and *8th* Acts of King Charles IId's Parliament at Edinburgh, June 11. 1640. with many other acts of the general aſſemblies of this church, and acts of parliament of this nation, as will eaſily appear to any that ſhall peruſe the regiſters of kirk and ſtate. 4. Becauſe it doth clearly tend unto the bringing of the church and the miniſters thereof in bondage unto the luſts and will of men, by taking from them liberty of diſcharging their conſciences in declaring all the counſel of God, and reproving of the ſins of all men freely, and without reſpect of perſons. Thus being bound in the ſpirit, we have been conſtrained in this cold and declining time (wherein few are valiant for the truth, or do faithfully and zealouſly plead for the Lord and his intereſts, and many do conſpire for making void of his law, though, bleſſed be his Majeſty, he wants not a cloud of honourable witneſſes in theſe nations, who have gone before us in theſe things, the meaſure of whoſe teſtimony we do deſire in ſome things to fill up, according to the light and ſtrength which we have received

of

of the Lord,) to ſtand up for his precious truth, and to teſtify before God, angels and men, our owning and approving of the doctrine, worſhip and government of the church of Scotland, and of the national covenant, and of the ſolemn league and covenant of the three nations, and of ſo much of the work of uniformity in religion, as is attained in one Confeſſion of Faith, Directory of Worſhip, form of church government, and catechiſing; and to profeſs and avouch our adherence unto all theſe, as having their foundations laid in the bleſſed word of truth, and as being agreeable to that rule that bringeth peace in walking according thereto; and to diſclaim and diſavow all things that are contrary and deſtructive thereunto, eſpecially the manifold errors and hereſies of theſe times, and the vaſt toleration thereof now eſtabliſhed in a law, and that groſs Eraſtianiſm whereby the keys of the kingdom of heaven are in many things, by exotic powers, extorted out of the hands of Jeſus Chriſt, and the officers of his houſe, and the liberties of his houſe wronged, and his ſervants brought into bondage, in all which we have (ſo far as we have obtained mercy to know our own hearts) confidence to take God to record upon our ſouls, that we have not deſired nor deſigned to provoke any, nor to appear ſingular; but in the ſimplicity of our hearts, to diſcharge our conſciences to our flocks, and to this whole church and nation, and to all that are intereſted and concerned in theſe things, and to the churches and ſaints abroad, as many as hear hereof, and to our poſterity when we are gone. And therefore we have only to add, firſt, That it is the earneſt deſire of our ſouls, and our ſerious exhortation and warning to theſe of our flocks, and to all the Lord's people in the land, that they would labour to have the word of God richly dwelling in them, that they may be able to try the ſpirits, and to diſcern of things that differ; to know what is truth, and what is error, and what is right, and what is wrong; and that they would ſtudy to be rooted in the faith and in the love of Jeſus Chriſt, and of his precious truth and ordinances, retaining an honourable eſtimation thereof in their hearts, and expreſſing their ſincere affection and reſpect thereunto in all their ways, and that they would ſtudy to keep freſh upon their ſouls, the remembrance of all the goodneſs of the Lord, and of all the great works that he hath done for us, and for our fathers of old; and of our ſolemn vows and covenants made with God in the ſight of angels and men, and never to ſuffer ſuch forgetfulneſs and profanity

to poſſeſs them, as to think themſelves looſed from the true and genuine tie thereof; but to keep themſelves under the bond of the ſame, and ſincerely, really and conſtantly, to endeavour the performance of the duties to which they are thereby obliged, and that they may not be offended nor ſtumble at Jeſus Chriſt and his work, nor faint, nor caſt away their confidence, becauſe of backſlidings, and revoltings, and diviſions, and hereſies; or becauſe of diſappointments, and reproaches, and contradictions, and oppoſitions, and oppreſſions, and perſecutions, for theſe things muſt be, that they which are approven may be made manifeſt, but that they be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, poſſeſſing their ſouls in patience, and waiting for his ſalvation, knowing, that he that endureth to the end, ſhall be ſaved; and in the mean while, comforting themſelves in this, that God hath not caſt off the care of his church and people in this land. It is a mercy moſt worthy of our obſervation, that errors and hereſies, notwithſtanding all the advantages they have had theſe ſeven years paſt in Scotland, have taken hold but of few profeſſors, formerly noted for the knowledge and love of the truth; and that the preaching of the goſpel, notwithſtanding all the diſadvantages it hath been attended with theſe years, yet hath been bleſſed of God in ſeveral places of the land, to the bringing in and building up of ſouls; an evidence that the Lord is yet amongſt us, and a promiſing branch of hope that he will revive his work, and bring forth his remnant, and continue to dwell in our land. And we are alſo bold in our God, to warn the higher powers, into whoſe hand the Lord hath, in the depths of his righteous judgments, given this nation, that they would not look upon this our teſtimony, as proceeding from any evil ſpirit, or carnal or politic deſign, but from the ſincere and innocent impreſſions of our duty made upon our hearts by Jeſus Chriſt (who though he is the Prince of peace, yet did the zeal of the Lord's houſe eat him up, and make him witneſs againſt the corrupters of his truth, and polluters of his worſhip, and profaners of his temple, and all unrighteouſneſs of men) nor deſpiſe the words of ſoberneſs and truth, which though proceeding but from a very few poor weak inſtruments, yet we are ſure, have their foundations in the ſcriptures of truth, and are, as to the matter confirmed; we hope, with the heart approbation of many of the thouſands of the Iſrael of God in this land, but that laying aſide the balances of outward diſpenſations,

penſations, and politic principles and intendments, they would weigh things in the balance of the Lord's ſanctuary, and in the fear of the great and dreadful name of the Lord, ſearch and try their way in order to this nation; eſpecially in order to the houſe of God, which doth in a great meaſure lie waſte; yea, would to God were not laid waſte and made deſolate, and the hedges thereof broken down, while men run to build and fence their own houſe with the ſpoils and ruins of the houſe of God. The wrath of God is revealed from heaven againſt all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men. Jeruſalem hath been a cup of trembling and a burdenſome ſtone to many people, and hath cut them in pieces, who have burdened themſelves therewith, Zech. xii. 2, 3. and the vengeance of the Lord's temple hath broken in pieces many of the powers of the earth, Jer. l. 15, 28. And whoever have endeavoured to raiſe themſelves upon the ruins of his houſe, have been buried under the rubbiſh thereof; yea, where ſervices hath been otherwiſe commanded and proſpered of the Lord: Yet when men for rooting of themſelves have remitted their zeal for the houſe of God, and countenanced the worſhipping of calves and idol gods, their former ſervices have been imputed unto them for iniquity, and the Lord hath threatened to avenge them upon them and their houſe, 2 Kings x. 29, 32. Hoſea i. 4. And therefore it concerns the higher powers that now are, under the peril of the dreadful diſpleaſure of the Lord of hoſts, who is zealous for his holy temple, and for his people, timeouſly and ſeriouſly to conſider of theſe things, and whether their actings, in order to this nation and church in thoſe things that concern righteouſneſs and religion, be agreeable to the rule of equity, and to the bond of the brotherly covenant; or if the royal law in theſe matters be not violated, and the ſolemn covenant broken and laid aſide, and forgotten, and the hedges of the Lord's vine broken down, ſo that all they which do paſs by the way do pluck her, and the boar out of the wood doth waſte it, and the wild beaſt out of the field doth devour it. *Return, we beſeech thee, O God of hoſts: look down from heaven, and behold and viſit this vine: and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted: and the branch that thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf. It is burnt with fire, it is cut down, they periſh at the rebuke of thy countenance. Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand: upon the ſon of man whom thou madeſt ſtrong for thyſelf. So will not we go back from thee: quicken*

us,

us, and we will call upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts: cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved.

October 1658. Subscribed by us,

Mr. *Samuel Rutherford*, professor of divinity at St. Andrews, and minister of the gospel there.
Mr. *James Wedderburn*, minister of the gospel at Moonsie.
—— *John Crookshank*, minister at Regortoun.
—— *James Guthrie*, minister of the gospel at Stirling.
—— *Alexander Moncrief*, minister at Scoony.
—— *John Murray*, minister at Methven.
—— *Robert Campbell*, minister at Mullein.
—— *Francis Peirson*, minister at Kirkmichael.

A LET-

A LETTER from ſeveral Miniſters homologating the former TESTIMONY.

REVEREND and dear brethren, being informed that you are upon thoughts of cauſing print the Teſtimony, given by you in behalf of the doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and government of the kirk of Scotland, and of the national covenant, and ſolemn league and covenant, and the work of uniformity in religion, and againſt the errors, hereſies, and blaſphemies of the times, and the toleration thereof, *&c.* And taking to our ſerious conſideration the manifold dangers that do threaten religion, and the work of God in theſe nations, eſpecially in this church, with the continuance and increaſe thereof day by day: We could not but encourage you therein; and for the exoneration of our own ſouls, join with you as joint witneſſes in thoſe matters. We could have wiſhed, and we know, ſo alſo could ye, that there had been a new draught fitted in every thing, to the preſent ſtate and condition of the time, and to the workings of the ſpirit of deluſion therein: and in a ſpecial way taking notice of that unhappy petition lately ſubſcribed and promoted by ſome few of our countrymen, in behalf of that vaſt toleration that is now on foot in theſe nations; a petition that we are the more bound to witneſs againſt, becauſe it is commonly reported, and we believe, not without ground, to be ſubſcribed by Mr. Thomas Ireland, who did once profeſs himſelf to be of our number, whoſe miſcarriage in that particular, as we deſire to be humbled before God for it, ſo we judge it our duty, and we know alſo, ſo do ye, to bear witneſs againſt it before the world; but knowing that it would take a long time before a new draught of a teſtimony could be condeſcended upon, by theſe that live at ſuch a diſtance, eſpecially in the winter ſeaſon; we thought it better to encourage you to publiſh this, and to take hold of the preſent opportunity of ſignifying our conſent thereunto, than to delay, being altogether uncertain what the preſent confuſions might bring forth. That we did not at the firſt ſubſcribing join therein, was not upon any diſſatisfaction upon the matter which it contains, we being abundantly clear in that from the beginning, but ſome of us were cut off from the occaſion, by phyſical impediments, and others knowing that there was at that time ſome endeavours and expectation of

an addreſs to be made by ſeveral ſynods, to the civil powers, for remedying of the evils which you then thought fit to witneſs againſt, in ſuch a way, they judged it more expedient for the time, to delay the giving of any ſuch teſtimony, until theſe addreſſes ſhould prove ineffectual: and there being now no acceſs thereunto, we are very free to homologate your Teſtimony, and do hereby declare our conſent and adherence to the ſame, deſiring that it may be conſtrued of the world, and accepted of God, not only as yours, but as ours and yours jointly: So commending you to the grace of God, we continue

Your very affectionate brethren
Nov. 22, 1650. in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,

Mr. *Thomas Lundie*, miniſter at Ratray.
—— *James Symſon*, miniſter at Airth.
—— *George Murray*, miniſter at Fouls.
—— *Robert Rule*, miniſter at Stirling.
—— *Thomas Hogg*, miniſter at Lerber.
—— *Thomas Glaſs*, miniſter at Dunkell.
—— *James Strachan*, miniſter at Dunkell.
—— *Gilbert Menzies*, miniſter at Fortengel.
—— *Patrick Campbell*, miniſter at Killin.

For their reverend brethren Mr. Samuel Rutherford, principal of the divinity college in St. Andrews, Mr. James Guthrie, miniſter at Stirling, and the reſt of the brethren ſubſcribing the Teſtimony.

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